

GODFREY WINN'S Scrapbook of the War

With 81 Illustrations

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to acknowledge with gratitude the permission of the Editor of *Woman's Illustrated* to reproduce the text of this book ; also I wish to express my indebtedness to the directors of the *Express* Newspapers, to the Public Relations Department of the Canadian Forces in this country, to the Air Ministry and to sundry friends, for being able to include photographs and mementoes of interest which have been given to me as souvenirs in the course of my travels as a war correspondent.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The Prime Minister with General McNaughton, Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Forces in Britain	Frontispiece PAGE
Here is the first of my collection of Permits	11
They haven't the faces of film stars, but . . . sometimes a film star prefers the anonymous rôle of a pilot	12
Through the kindness of the Salvation Army, Mr. and Mrs. Skillito of Sheffield visit their son's grave in France, on the last Armistice Day of the botched peace . . .	17
The Canadian War Memorial at Vimy	18
'Vengeance brings no one luck and dries no tears ! . . . '	18
Guns over Convoy	23
The start in the dawn : our last breath of fresh air for fourteen hours	24
'We look for our prey upon the waters' is the motto of their squadron	24
The length of the fuselage is that of a cricket pitch	24
Two of the crew of the Sunderland flying boat in which I did an Atlantic patrol . . .	25
"We've got tuppence to spend"	26
On the edge of the world—the Mull of Kintyre Lighthouse in war-time	35
Mediterranean Cruise	36
The <i>Bartolomeo Colleoni</i> , first Italian cruiser to be sunk in the war	36
Mediterranean Convoy—and her near miss	36
This Sapper's son, Albert—born in what was once the home of the Queen's father, Woolmer's Park.. . . .	37
My godson, William	37
The newly teamed up crew of a Blenheim bomber	38
Their average age was nineteen, and the only thing they lacked, they told me, was a four-leafed clover for luck	38
Tiny, Tommy and Shorty, now members of Churchill's Light Brigade	38
John Winant, American Ambassador to our shores, gave me this picture for my Scrapbook . . .	47
On the bridge of a North Sea convoy : the hour before the dawn	47
'Ginger' Bailey, Hudson pilot, with his wife after he had received the D.F.M. at Buckingham Palace	48
The hiding-place of the <i>Altmark</i>	48
Mrs. Patterson, woman pilot of the A.T.A., has one sort of job ; Granny, in a Midlands factory, another ; and Miss Anne Osborne, glass-etching, yet another	49

	PAGE
Frank Scott, ex-policeman from Leeds, now serving as air crew in the R.A.F.	50
John, ex-journalist, who was serving on board one of the M.L.s in the St. Nazaire raid	50
Sergeant-major Fleming, of the Cameron Highlanders, wounded at Dunkirk	50
The strength of a ship is so often the strength of the P.O.'s Mess	59
Frances Day	60
Rita Hayworth	60
The Commander-in-Chief with the eyes of the visionary: General McNaughton	61
The Private	61
The Padre: John Young Fraser from Toronto	61
Mr. Hadfield, their regimental sergeant-major, fought in the last war as a lad of sixteen	62
Another generation: The Second Front is his only thought, to 'get cracking'	62
The Fife and Drum Band of the Canadian Highland Light Infantry on Church Parade	71
I have a lesson from Pipe Major Corstorphine	71
Stonehenge, taken by a Hungarian pilot serving in the R.A.F.	72
Our land under sun and shadow	72
These carrier-pigeons brought the first news of the Dieppe raid	72
They call them Tail End Charlies—the rear-gunners of the R.A.F.	73
H.M.S. <i>Blencathra</i> , the guardian of a hundred English Channel convoys	74
Convoy to Russia	74
Summer in the Med. The oil tanker <i>Ohio</i> battles through to Malta	83
Winter in the Barentz Sea. <i>En route</i> to Russia	83
Spring in England	83
Tessie O'Shea. Her broadcasts used to reach us even in the Russian waters, and remind us of all the 'Bright Lights' waiting	84
"From now on," their captain said, "you must expect continuous attacks"	85
End of the voyage. Two merchantmen survivors live to fight another day	85
Start of the voyage. "Are you coming with us to Russia as our mascot?"	85
Commander Bone, D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N., captain of H.M. Submarine <i>Tigris</i>	86
My mates on an historic voyage to Russia	86
"Was it an iceberg, on our port beam, or a crashed plane frozen over?"	95
After one action our decks were knee-deep in empty shell cases	95
All that was left of the leading raider's plane . . . our second bag that day	95
Flowers for the Living.	96

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Profession: Journaliste-écrivain

Né le 15 Octobre 1906

à Birmingham

domicilié à 1^{re} Ambassade d'Angleterre
Paris

Pièce d'identité n° Passeport N°164531

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Londres



(1) A marquer la date de la délivrance.

NATIONALITÉ:

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est autorisé à se rendre aux armées

~~Opérations de la 1^{re} Armée~~

~~La 7^{me} Armée~~

~~La 1^{re} Armée~~

Mode de locomotion autorisé:

~~train-automobile~~

voiture privée

Motif du déplacement:

~~mission spéciale~~
visite aux armées autorisée
par le Général Commandant



28 Octobre 1939

Le Général chef du B. C. M. C.

O. Le Chef de Section,

Capitaine PECCATE

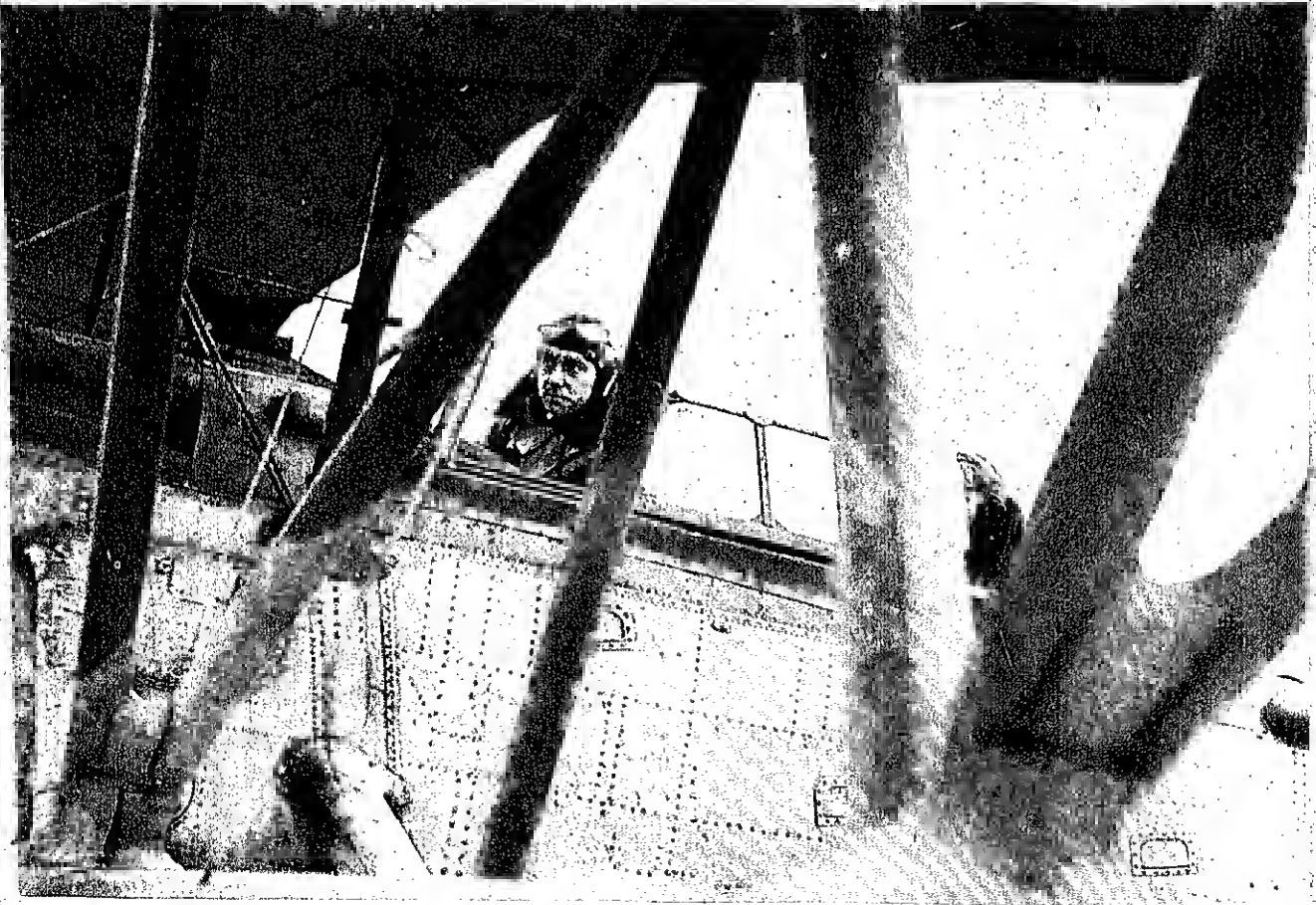
Voir au dos: « OBSERVATIONS »

Here is the first of my collection of Permits—War Permits and Passes of all sorts and descriptions with which I have been able to visit many of the places described in these pages.

The Pass you see reproduced above took me into the then legendary Maginot Line in the Autumn of 1939, where, when my guide and I arrived, I could only see a grassy hillside in front of us. He smiled cryptically and started to walk on ahead. Suddenly, after about a hundred yards, and at the point where we should have had to commence climbing, a great door slid sideways, reminding me of the cave entrance in the pantomime, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. We crossed the drawbridge and there before us was a long tunnel that now reminded me instead of the Underground Railway in London.



They haven't the faces of film stars, but . . .



RAIPU RICHARDSON

I DON'T know really that this Scrapbook needs any introduction. The title speaks for itself. Ever since the beginning of the war, when I had the privilege of being the first writer to visit our troops in France, and afterwards the then legendary Maginot Line, I have kept at odd times and on odd scraps of paper, aided by cuttings and snapshots, a Scrapbook that now fills several volumes. At this moment, the eve of my joining the Royal Navy, as an ordinary seaman, it was suggested that I should re-publish as a permanent record as well as a personal memento those pages of the Scrapbook which seemed to me to possess universal significance: to share them with anyone who might be interested, or too busy to have kept a war-time Scrapbook of their own from the beginning. I have been encouraged in this decision by the requests I have received from all over the world from those who have read the instalments of my Scrapbook week by week, in magazine form. I sincerely hope that they may find some of their favourite extracts within these covers, and that those who are turning over the pages for the first time will, if nothing else, be stimulated to start a scrapbook of their own from now on.

And now let's start turning back the pages. I can hardly believe that it's already more than three years that I stood on a platform of the Gare de l'Est, just as I was leaving Paris to go up the line, and found on the bookstall a little paper-backed book that has gone with me ever since on all my adventures, into every front-line in turn. The book contains the philosophy of a woman who endured pain and loneliness throughout her short life, and who is now regarded as an immortal among short-story writers. Her name is Katherine Mansfield, and in her *Journal* you will find this passage. It was born in the night-watches, when she awoke from a nightmare that presaged her death, and as she lay there in the darkness, listening to the frantic beating of her own heart, her spirit within cried out these words, that I have learnt by heart:

Honesty is the only thing one seems to prize beyond life, love, death, everything. It alone remaineth. O, you who come after me, will you believe it? At the end truth is the only thing worth having. It's more thrilling than love, more joyful and passionate. It simply cannot fail. All else fails.

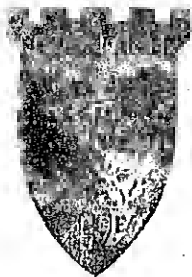
The next extract I want to reproduce here—and it is important that right through the book you should notice the dates of the entries—I placed in my diary the day that, driving down one of those endless straight roads bordered by elms that are such a feature of the Northern French landscape, I suddenly came in sight of a ruined fort, a famous landmark in the last war. We got out and explored its multitudinous stone passages, its turrets, pitted and scarred, its grass banks where, in the hollows made by ancient shell-fire, shrubs and undergrowth had multiplied exceedingly once more in the years between. But what moved me most of all were the scores of names like Jacqueline and Robert, Marie and Jean, Josée and Charles, entwined with Cupid's arrows and lovers' knots, that were scratched everywhere on the sides of the walls, so that you could almost hear the echoes of their happy laughter.

Across the road from that ruined fort, and up some stone steps, I discovered a tiny cemetery, and on one of the plaques, erected, too, in the years of peace, this simple inscription that yet says everything.

ANNIVERSAIRE : TOUT PASSE : TOUT
S'EFFACE, HORS LE SOUVENIR.

Everything passes (yes, even the agony of sorrow, of irreplaceable loss), everything vanishes with time, except remembrance. The memories are ours. Nothing can touch them, nothing can destroy them. It was so in the last war. It will be the same with this one.

17TH FEBRUARY, 1940



HERE is a badge that was given to me as a gesture of friendship by the officers of the first fort in the Maginot Line that I visited. I must explain that each separate fort in the whole Line has designed its special badge with the insignia of its own regiment upon it. So I imagine I must be the only Englishman who possesses this particular badge. When the car came to a standstill this morning I could not understand why at first. "But where is the fort?" I asked my guiding officer, expecting to see its turrets silhouetted against the sky-line. Instead, I could only see a grassy hillside in front of us. He smiled cryptically and started to walk on ahead. Suddenly, after about a hundred yards, and at the point where we should have had to commence climbing, a great door slid sideways, reminding me of the cave entrance in the pantomime 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.' We crossed the drawbridge and there before us was a long tunnel that now reminded me instead of the Underground railway in London, except that it had no platform at the side, and you could walk on the same level as the single track which ran as far as one could see into the distance. There was a truck standing still, and I peeped over the side, expecting to find it full of ammunition. What was my surprise and amusement to discover instead—a hoard of apples! My guide explained to me that the fort stretches for fourteen kilometres in circumference, and it is built entirely on a system of criss-cross passages, which means that the men live their whole life in a corridor; that they have their cinema shows in one, their religious services, with the tiny altar placed upon a movable stand with wheels to draw it away again, and even their meals sitting back to back at tables which, when not in use, shut up against the wall. As we advanced down the corridor we came to still more gates which, only when a green light went on, like a B.B.C. studio, slid back to allow us to pass through. As we walked on and on I was not surprised to hear that the officers use bicycles to go from one gun emplacement to another! It was fascinating to watch the guns going up in their hydraulic lifts towards the surface of the earth, just by the pressing of a button. While I was there we had a sing-song, and they taught me the words of their Maginot fort song: *Au Fond de L'Ouvrage*.

*Au fond de l'Ouvrage,
Nous chantons et combattons
Il sont du courage
Les gars du Béton.*

*Pour défendre la France
On nous a fait venir
La peine et la souffrance
Sauront nous aguerrir.*

*In the depths of the 'Work'
We sing—and we fight;
They are filled with courage
The lads of "The Cement."*

*For the defence of France
They have brought us here.
Trouble and suffering
Will serve to sharpen our warrior spirit.*

2ND MARCH, 1940

WHENEVER I see a new picture of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor my thoughts return to a stormy black-as-pitch evening when I happened to be passing back through Paris on my way home. At five o'clock I set out in a taxi for Neuilly, and even the driver showed himself several times at a loss before finally he brought me safely to a standstill outside No. 24, Boulevard Suchet. There was a sudden increase in the storm as I stepped into the courtyard. For a moment I could hardly get my breath as I rang the bell and waited for the door to open. The passion of the warring elements, I felt, had a strange symbolism at that moment. What you are going to read now are some extracts from my private record, entered into my diary at the time.

When my hostess entered the room I was struck at once by the fact that her photographs do not do her looks justice. Her mouth is much softer, and her eyes are strikingly beautiful—they are the dominating feature of her face. Inevitably we talked about the war, and the name of Ribbentrop cropped up. The Duchess told me that she had only met him twice in her life, at parties in London, and made this illuminating comment about his character: that if he were interrupted in conversation he would go on with his discourse a few minutes later, exactly where he had left off, repeating the last sentence, as though he had learnt the whole thing off by heart. "And your impression of Hitler, when you met him?" I asked. Actually she had only been in his presence for five minutes, but all the same it gave her time to build up a vivid impression. She told me that his skin is putty-coloured, his hair more neatly brushed than in most of his pictures, and his eyes are very blue. As a contrast to that undisciplined madman's roar which comes over the wireless when he is making a speech, his voice in private conversation is very quiet; but she noticed that the flesh at the side of each of his nails was extremely ragged, as though he was eternally rubbing one finger with the next one, from nervous concentration. Incidentally, I noticed something about the Duchess's own hands. Throughout the time we talked together—and I was with her over two hours—her hands were quite still, folded in her lap. She sat very upright on the edge of the sofa, and yet at the same time she gave the impression of being relaxed. Another of the questions I asked her—and she answered it frankly and at once—was: "What do you think are the most important things in life?" "Oh, surely that people should be happy round you!" And she went on to explain: "If I see a servant with a sour face, it worries me all day. What is the matter, I think? Is it something private in their own life, or something I can put right?" When, finally, my hostess stood up, she said with a smile: "My maid always reproaches me that I do not give myself enough time to dress. And when the Duke comes on leave we always seem to have so much to tell each other. That is why I opened the house again, despite the risk of air raids. The Duke feels then that he has a home to come back to, when his military duties permit. We love our home so much," she added simply. "But it does not matter where we are, so long as we are together. By my staying in Paris, it means that we still do see each other occasionally. And, anyway, I am a fatalist about air raids and everything else." And my own thoughts go back, as we stand on the landing saying good-bye, to a single sentence in the conversation that, if I remembered nothing else of our talk together, I could not forget. This was the sentence: "*A long time ago, I made up my mind that, whatever happened, I would never allow myself to become bitter.*"

* * * * *

The next time that I met the Duchess of Windsor was with her husband, when we were fellow guests at a dinner party given by Sir Charles and Lady Mendl at their home at Versailles. (It has been barbarously pillaged of its treasures since by the Nazis.) Here is the extract from what I wrote in my diary before I went to sleep that night: Have enjoyed my week-end enormously. Elsie, although she must be considerably older than my mother, is the youngest woman I have ever met. What is her secret? There is a clue in the cushions heaped up on the sofa of her sitting-room, with their embroidered mottoes, like: "*Why save for a rainy day? It only brings the rain.*" "*Never complain, never explain.*" "*He who rides on a tiger cannot descend.*"

And my own favourite: '*Failure only begins when you give up trying to succeed.*' In the last war Elsie made a magnificent success of the American hospital which she ran under fire. In this war she has turned her fabulous home into a week-end escape for all those who, serving in some capacity or other, may snatch brief relaxation and return refreshed to their post. After dinner we played a charming, childish game called Chinese Checkers, which is a kind of up-to-date form of Halma. At ten-thirty someone suggested a final game, but H.R.H. shook his head. His week-end leave was up in the morning. His one thought was to be fresh for his early start. As he stood in front of the fire-place, waiting for his car to come round, he made an unforgettable picture in the dark blue mess uniform of the Welch Fusiliers. Noticing my eyes upon him, he said with that smile that is famous all over the world, touching his tunic as he spoke: "This was made for me twenty-five years ago, and I believe I am thinner to-day!" A moment later the long, exquisite *salon* was empty, and as I looked after their departing figures, side by side, I could not help feeling that there went a couple whose devotion was real and true and indestructible.

30TH MARCH, 1940

ROLL out the Barrel. . . . I shall never hear that familiar war-tune again without thinking of an ice-cold sea, complete darkness, and a host of men struggling in the water for their lives. When I visited H.M.S. *Raven*, the Naval Air Arm Station, I talked with one of the survivors of H.M.S. *Royal Oak*, and he told me that during the four hours he and his fellow-sailors were in the water, fighting the darkness and the cold, and the terror of the unknown, they went on repeating the refrain of 'Roll out the Barrel' to keep up their spirits. Have you ever had the curious sensation of seeing someone coming across the room towards you and recognizing their every feature, and yet feeling certain that you have never spoken to them in the flesh before? That experience came to me, too, in H.M.S. *Raven*, and the face that I recognized belonged to a famous British film star who, the moment war broke out, chose to become an anonymous volunteer Naval flying officer, Ralph Richardson.

We celebrated our meeting by having a drink together. What do you think that drink consisted of? *Tomato juice*! There were rows and rows of glasses full of tomato juice standing ready on the table of the mess, and I noticed that nearly every one of his fellow officers preferred that to any other drink.

* * * * *

I wish I could draw. If so I would make a sketch for my Scrapbook of the study on the first floor of the Admiralty, with its three windows overlooking Horse Guards Parade, where Winston Churchill spends his working day (the Prime Minister was at that time First Lord of the Admiralty). I was allowed to catch a glimpse of it yesterday. And do you know what struck me most? Not the three telephones on the desk—one green, one white, one black; not the glasses set out on a tray with a siphon of soda-water; not the two red leather arm-chairs drawn up side by side in front of the fire; not the picture of the famous 'Victory of Camperdown' that hangs over the mantelpiece; but something that stands on the mantelpiece itself. A plain little mirror with a wooden frame, the sort of mirror that everyone of us used to have in our dormitory when we were at school. It looks so strangely out of keeping with the magnificence of that historic Council Chamber. In front of one of the windows looking out on to the Park there is a small desk with a typewriter on it. A silent typewriter. One of two women secretaries is always on duty, for it is not generally known that Mr. Churchill dictates every word of his vast output of books, as well as all his official memoranda. As he dictates he walks up and down the room, and likes his work to be taken straight down on the machine; he cannot be bothered to wait for shorthand notes to be transcribed. 'He had that spacious simplicity which we call genius.' I did not write that description. I wish I had, though, as a matter of fact, its author did not mean it to apply to Mr. Churchill, but to the man who, centuries ago, set out against fantastic odds to sail towards a new world. Christopher Columbus.

* * * * *



Through the kindness of the Salvation Army, Mr. and Mrs. Shillito of Sheffield visit their son's grave in France, on the last Armistice Day of the botched peace.



20TH APRIL, 1940

HAVE you ever felt the breath of the flame very close upon your cheek? I experienced this in a telephone box of a Glasgow hotel. I had arrived there after a long journey down from Wick, where I had landed off an Aberdeen fishing trawler. To say that the sea had given me this time a bad drubbing would have been a hopeless under-statement. I was all-in when I reached that hotel at Glasgow. It seemed like a haven, until they said I was wanted urgently on the 'phone. An unknown voice the other end of the wire said to me: "Have you heard the news about your ship?" "Which ship?" I queried, having recently been out in so many. "The *Royal Archer*, the one in which you made your North Sea convoy trip." The voice went on unemotionally, relentlessly. "It sank this afternoon. Struck a mine." There was a pause while again I waited, once more unable to say what was on the tip of my tongue, to ask the question that was beating out a tattoo against my heart. And then there came five blessed words: "The crew are all safe." I went out of the telephone box, which suddenly seemed unbearably stuffy. I sat down in a corner of the lounge, which was full of a Saturday night crowd, drinking and chattering. I did not hear them or the music from the room beyond. I was trying to thank God for having watched over these men with whom I had sailed and whom I had grown to love—Captain Piper, and Chief Steward Nelson and the Bo'sun, and young Bobbie Shiels, the baby of the crew, whose second ducking this was, and he not yet seventeen.

Suddenly, as I put down the telephone receiver, an almost incongruous thought flashed through my mind in the way that does happen sometimes at such moments. "I wonder what happened to the tulips?" I exclaimed aloud. You see, when I went on board I found that someone had placed a vase of mauve tulips on the long, empty table of the dining saloon that in peace-time was crowded with happy holiday faces. And each day as we ploughed our way through the North Sea, with an ever-increasing under-current of nervous tension, I'd find myself looking forward to meals. Not because I was feeling like eating, but because it gave me another chance to gaze at the tulips—harbinger of spring, memorial of hope, living proof of the process of eternal rebirth in the world.

* * * * *

There's another entry about tulips in my Scrapbook that I think you might like to have for yours too. I entered it as I crossed over the Forth Bridge—surely one of the most magnificent views in the whole world—on my way back to Edinburgh, after spending a day at a Naval base. A grand day it was, too, and one of the highlights was a visit to the Polish submarine, the *Orzel*, that recently thrilled and warmed the heart of us all by the incredibly gallant way in which it escaped from the clutches of the Germans. Without any navigation charts it succeeded in running the whole gauntlet and survived to tell the story, after steering safely into port; one of the great heroic deeds of the war. And there in the officers' mess, beside the exquisite picture of the Madonna they had salvaged from one of their lovely churches, what do you think I found? Why, a bunch of pink and white tulips, chubby little fellows, which had been stuck into a teapot whose lid had been removed. They weren't arranged to the best advantage—in fact, all the heads were far too close together in the improvised vase; but, all the same, I shall remember that patch of spring colour down there in the depths of the submarine far longer than many of the elaborately arranged, expensive bouquets that you often see on pedestals in an hotel or shop window. For I felt that these flowers were a kind of offering, a way of saying 'Thank you,' because to-morrow is another day, and behold, we live. (Since I wrote that the *Orzel* has been lost on patrol.)

27TH APRIL, 1940

IN front of the Viceroy's house in New Delhi stands a column on which are inscribed the words:

In thought, Faith,
In word, Wisdom,
In deed, Courage,
In life, Service,
So may India be great.

11TH MAY, 1940

I HAVE just been down to Sussex to see my godson, who is exactly one year old this week. As I bent over his cot I remembered vividly a conversation I had had with his mother just before he was born. "Aren't you afraid of bearing a son at such a time?" I asked. William's mother shook her head decisively. "War or no war," she replied, "it is only an incident in the ultimate scheme of the universe. It has no lasting significance. It cannot hurt my baby. By the time he grows up the skies will be clear again. The future belongs to him to make what he will of it, as it belongs to every human being born into this world."

* * * * *

'I seek my prey in the waters.' That is the motto of the Sunderland squadron whose visitor I was the other day, and the crest itself was devised by that now legendary figure, Lawrence of Arabia, who was once attached to the same squadron. It represents a cormorant, with wings outspread, perched upon a buoy. The day that I flew on patrol in a Sunderland we saw no enemy submarine. But even so, just think of the test of endurance that is accepted by each crew. For thirteen hours or more on end they are on patrol, from dawn to dusk, never able to relax their vigilance for a second, repeating, over and over again, the same manoeuvre as they circle in front of the convoy that they are guarding. And remember, too, that the convoy itself has first to be found, far out at sea, and likely enough it has strayed many miles from the spot where it is supposed to be at a certain hour. But the crew of ten or eleven carry on just as though they are on manoeuvres in peace-time. In a way, nothing could be more ordinary than the moment when, after an excellent lunch in the wardroom, I found myself in the galley. There were the cook and one of the riggers washing-up and drying the dishes just as you might do yourself. But just think of the difference. Your home, so secure, and this kitchen in the great steel bird which races across the sky at two hundred miles an hour. Next time you are washing-up you might think of those boys doing the same thing far out over the Atlantic.

* * * * *

There are two other cameos from this trip that I have recorded in my Scrapbook. The first is a memory of the night before the dawn in which we set out on our Atlantic patrol. After a concert, the sergeants gave a party in their mess and invited the officers and their womenfolk to join in the sing-song. At midnight, remembering what was ahead of me, I reluctantly dragged myself away, when suddenly in the shadow of the porch I came across the wife of one of the highest officers in the Command, saying good-bye to the wife of one of the sergeants in the squadron. They had ceased to be the complements of their husbands' respective ranks. Instead, they were simply two women, drawn to each other by the knowledge that the two men most dear to them in life shared a common danger, a common task. I could sense the feeling of mutual sympathy and admiration flowing between them. And then suddenly the older woman leant forward and kissed the cheek of the sergeant's 'missus.' As I went on my

way to snatch a few hours' sleep before my adventure, I found myself thinking—thinking what a pity it was that such gestures, which are so common, which seem so natural in war-time, cannot be preserved and re-echoed in the years of peace.

* * * * *

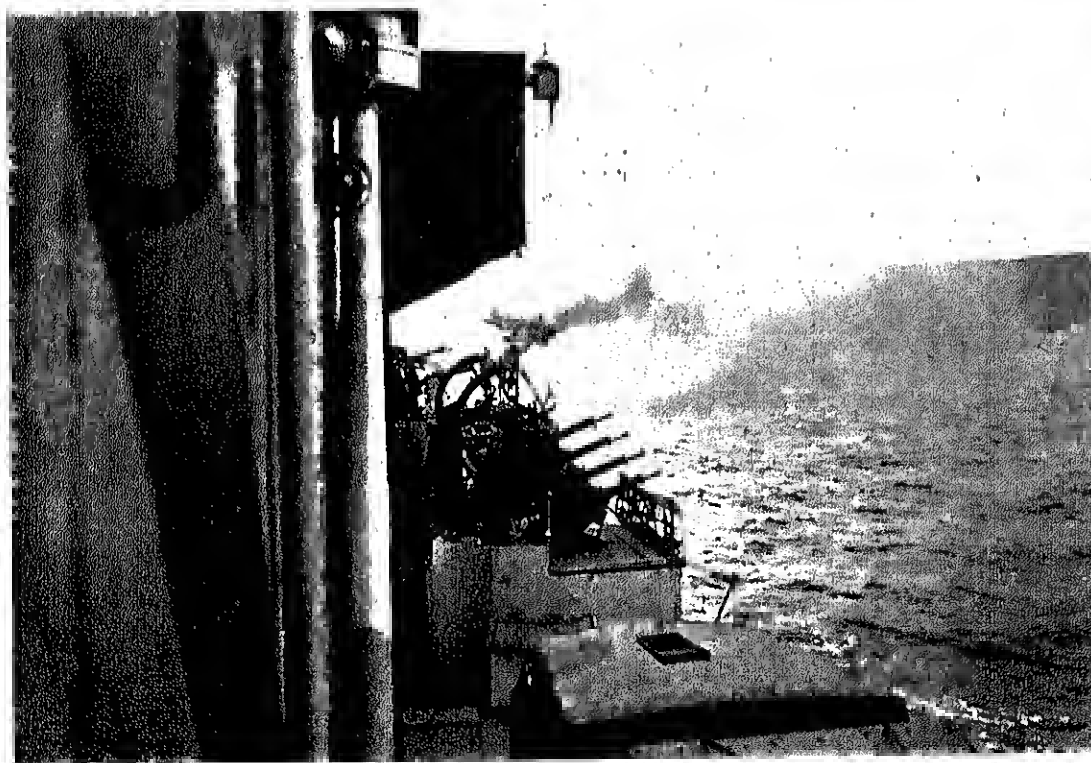
My other cameo concerns the dogs, collies most of them, which are the mascots of the squadron. Nearly every pilot has his own pet. And do you know what those dogs do? Each time that their master sets off on a patrol they accompany him down to the quayside. They watch silently with their tail at half-mast as he takes a motor-boat out into the bay, where his flying-boat lies at anchor. Then they trot back to the mess and lie outside all day on the porch, waiting. And this is the remarkable thing. Again and again during the day aircraft will pass overhead. But they make no sign of having heard the drone; they give no bark of recognition. They continue to lie there, each with his head between his paws—until the hour arrives when the patrol should be returning to port. Whereupon, without a word of reminder from a human source, they wake up and trot down to the quayside again, and stand gazing out to sea, quivering with excitement, until there comes a speck in the sky which grows and grows until it glides down upon the water. Immediately, they start barking furiously to show their masters that they are still there, waiting for them and longing to greet them.

1 ST JUNE, 1940

THREE English 'planes, flying over the German lines, were attacked and two were brought down in flames. The pilot of the third, though badly wounded, managed to bring it down in France, but when French troops got up to him they found that he was unconscious. They took him to the hospital at Nancy. When he recovered consciousness his first question was about the two men in the 'planes that had gone up with him. The doctor told him they were dead. The pilot was just a boy. He raised himself up in bed and brought his hand up to his bandaged head in a salute. "Never mind," he said; "it's for England!"

15 TH JUNE, 1940

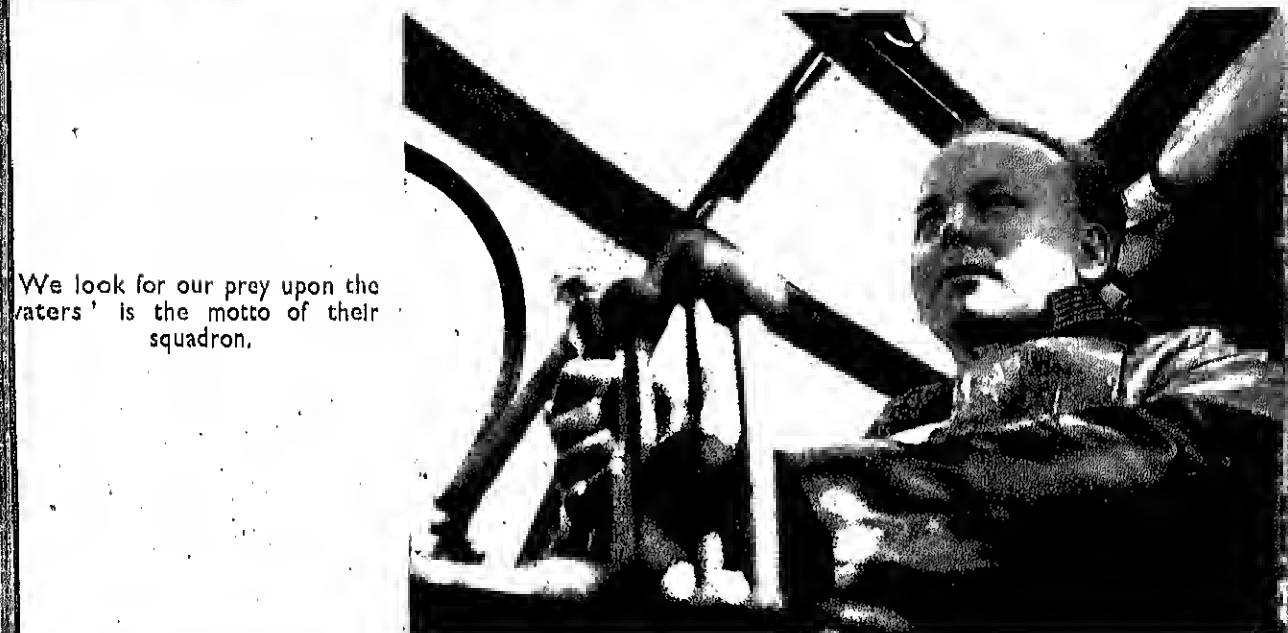
ON one of the anonymous railway platforms of my constant journeyings I saw something that warmed my heart. Let me put it on record in my Scrapbook. The journey had been more tedious than most; the train was two hours late, and on arrival we were greeted by the black-out. I was trying to collect my luggage in the semi-darkness when nearby I heard a rush of scurrying feet. I expected to see a child when I looked up, but instead, running past me, was a woman, who at first sight seemed middle-aged, dressed in sober, matronly hues. The next moment she was behaving in a very unmatronly fashion. She had leapt off the ground, throwing herself into the arms of a sergeant in battle-dress, who was hugging her to himself, as though they were the only two people in the world. And, for that ecstatic moment of reunion, they were. She was a bride again, young and pretty and dressed in white, and he had a carnation in the buttonhole of his blue serge suit. That evening I went to a film, and one scrap of dialogue from it caught my imagination. The hero was remonstrating with the heroine, and, taking her by the shoulders, he said bluntly: "I did not promise you happiness when I asked you to marry me. I offered you love."



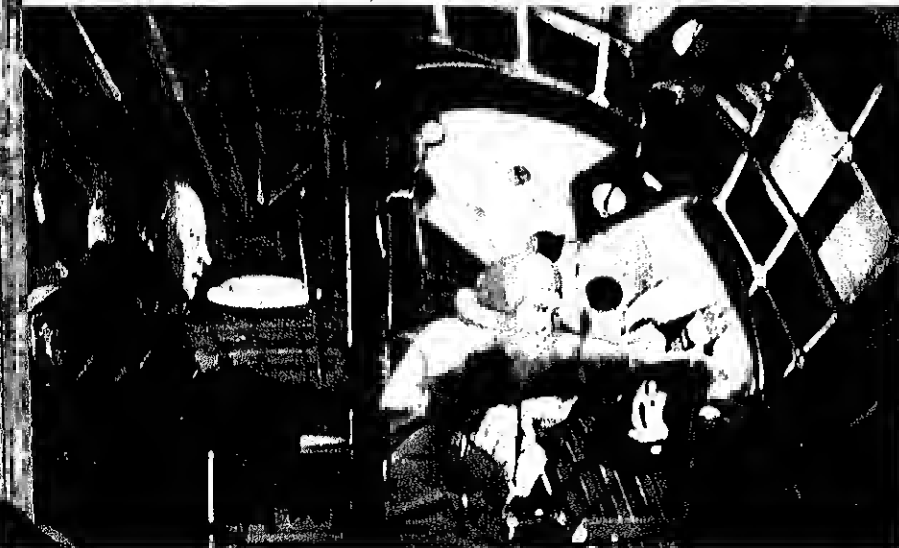
Guns over Convoy.



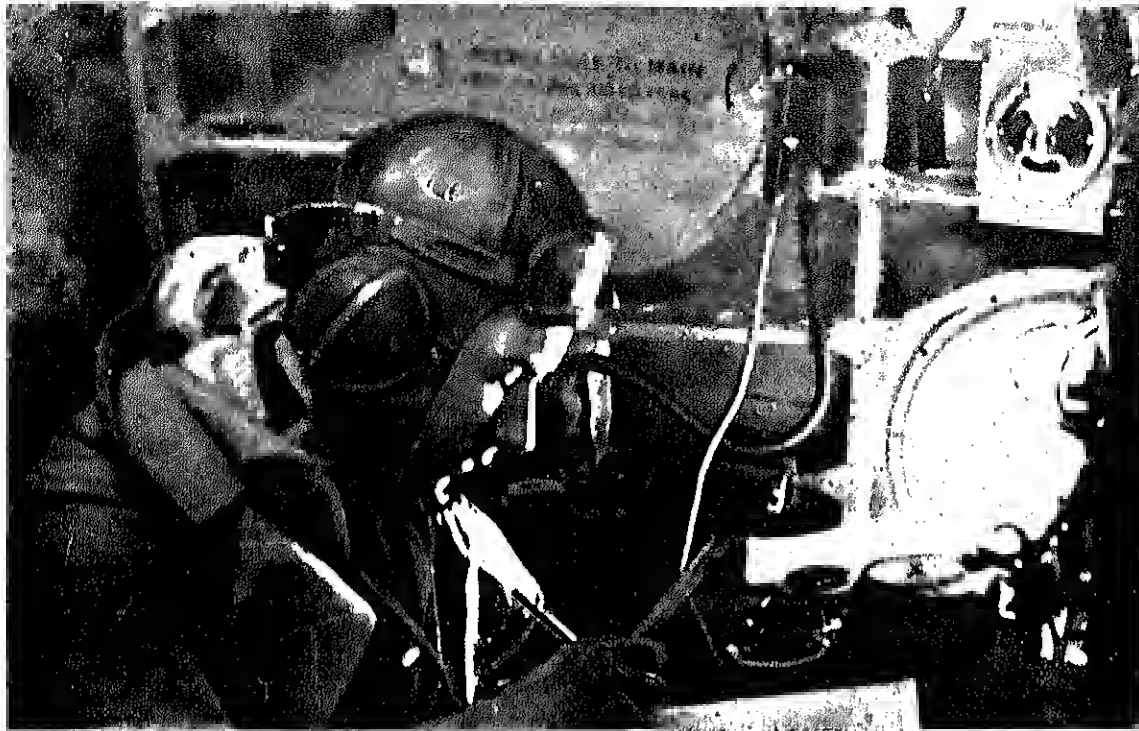
The start in the dawn : our
breath of fresh air for four
hours.



'We look for our prey upon the
waters' is the motto of their
squadron.



The length of the fuselage is
of a cricket pitch.



Two of the crew of the Sunderland Flying Boat in which I did an Atlantic patrol.



"We've got tuppence to spend,
and tuppence to lend,
and tuppence to send home to the wife."



13TH JULY, 1940

AS I listen to the news on the wireless to-night one phrase batters itself over and over again against the gate of my mind :

'ALL BREAKAGES MUST BE PAID FOR.'

Do you know where I saw that phrase staring at me ? At Strasbourg, where, on the French side of the river, one of the machine-gun emplacements with barricaded windows was inside a café, and where they had still left on the low, dusty walls the happier emblems of peace-time—advertisements for this brand of beer, and that vintage of wine. In the centre of them all was another notice that stared down at us with ironic significance, and subsequent events make me repeat it aloud in prophetic anger :

'ALL BREAKAGES MUST BE PAID FOR.'

And they will be.

20TH JULY, 1940

I REMEMBER, I remember. . . . How that familiar refrain now beats out its pattern. I remember the glitter and the gaiety of the Coronation Ball held at the Albert Hall, and a smiling, happy girl in an embroidered white dress, dancing nearly every dance with the same partner—a tall young man in a military uniform which in that care-free atmosphere gave the impression of fancy-dress. And at midnight, when the sudden shower of balloons fell upon us from the ceiling, I watched this couple leaping off the ground to catch their prizes. Pop, pop went the balloons as the laughing revellers attacked each other's hoard ; bang, bang, like the sound of machine-gun bullets. But you did not think of such similes on that night of peace and loyal rejoicing ; you did not think that the balloons could ever turn into a shower of hideous bombs. And the names of that happy couple who had eyes only for each other, blissfully unconscious of the gaze of all the rest of us, blissfully unaware of the ordeal that lay ahead of them ? Why, Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard of Holland.

* * * * *

I remember a July afternoon last summer, when the tennis team that I was captaining succeeded in mopping-up the united Harvard and Yale boys who were over here on a tour. We played the match on the perfect grass courts at St. George's Hill, and afterwards I had a party in the garden of my mother's cottage at Esher. Were we thirsty ! Did we lap up the cider cup that Mother had made ! Did we look forward to a return date this summer for the scratch team of Wimbledon stars I'd got together. Nigel Sharpe and Dickie Ritchie, Ted Ivory and Desmond Morris, and Cam Malfroy, the New Zealand Davis Cup player—where are they all now ? Desmond is in the R.A.F., and Dickie in the Army (he was afterwards taken prisoner at Singapore by the Japanese). Nigel is busy getting up tennis matches in aid of the Red Cross. And Cam ? I took a snapshot of him smiling into the sun, with a bunch of tennis rackets under his arm. And the other day I opened the evening paper, and there he was, still smiling, but this time in R.A.F. kit, just landed after a 'dog fight.' He was still smiling, because his squadron had accounted for fifteen enemy 'planes after only two days in France. Fifteen love.

10TH AUGUST, 1940

FROM Edinburgh I have received this letter from a peace-time stewardess. 'You write about ships and convoys, minesweepers and trawlers, port and starboard, fore and aft, in such an intimate manner that I see, read and finally cannot see anything for tears! Can't you take up your pen on behalf of us stewardesses? Here we are, hundreds of us, on land like fish out of water, gasping for the only home we know, the sea. We don't mind which sea we sail. Submarines, mines, bombers, hold no terrors for us. We don't ask to sail as stewardesses . . . if that is impossible we will go in the pantry, the kitchen, the larder—do anything—go anywhere—if only we can get back to our beloved ships. Can't you suggest that we take the place of some of the men and so release them for work that women cannot do?'

24TH AUGUST, 1940

A NAVAL man told me the story of how, on that historic day when the *Victory* was about three miles distant from the enemy, the signal officer went to the Admiral's cabin to make a report. And he found Nelson on his knees writing—the last words he ever penned. And these were the words:

'May the Great God whom I worship, grant to my country and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory: and may no misconduct in anyone tarnish it: and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British Fleet. For myself individually I commit my life to Him Who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend.'

28TH SEPTEMBER, 1940

A FRIEND of mine, who was one of the tragic survivors of the sudden Channel Islands evacuation last June, was talking to me to-day of her experiences when, although the islands had been previously demilitarized, the German planes came over and bombed the boat in which they were escaping. This was an unarmed steamer full of little children, yet they bombed it deliberately when it was helplessly at anchor in St. Peter Port, Guernsey. A ghastly experience—but of everything that she had to tell me, I have a feeling that I will remember most vividly her saying: "Just before I left with my baby, I went to the animal shelter to try to find my Alsatian, and there were two men assistants, with tears streaming down their faces, shooting abandoned dogs because they had run out of chloroform. The pile of dead dogs reached to the ceiling."

5TH OCTOBER, 1940

THE other day I read what I consider as fine an obituary notice as the war has yet inspired. It was a personal tribute, by a friend, to Commander Bickford, D.S.O. Commander Bickford was the captain of the submarine *Salmon* which, you will remember, torpedoed two Nazi cruisers and could have sunk the *Bremen* had it chosen to resort to Nazi methods. He was only thirty, and less than six months before his death he married Miss Valerie Courtney. This is what his friend, G.T.C., wrote: 'I have known Bickford for the last seventeen years. We joined Dartmouth the same term and went to our first ship together. He was a magnificent companion and a wonderful friend. To me the Navy will never be

quite the same again without him. To arrive in a port and find "Bicko" there was always the very best of news. His loss will cause intense and lasting sorrow to all who knew him. Courageous and daring in everything he did, he was one of the finest examples of the flower of British youth that could possibly be found.'

12TH OCTOBER, 1940

IT was a little paragraph tucked away in the corner of the paper, but I am glad that it caught my eye. The heading read: 'Spinsters Give £550.' And underneath it said, baldly: 'A month ago, the first spinsters' pensions of ten shillings were paid. The spinster-pensioners of Britain have presented the Red Cross Penny-a-Week Fund with their first collective contribution—a cheque for five hundred and fifty pounds—as a thanks-offering for the success of the cause. The money will be spent on parcels for prisoners of war.' When I read that I saw again in front of me a sea of faces looking up at the platform where I was speaking in the Town Hall of my home town, Birmingham—speaking for Miss Florence White on behalf of the crusade that spinsters should have pensions at fifty-five. As I spoke I looked out and could see thousands of pairs of hands folded with resignation upon their laps. Hands rough and red, many of them, from toil. Hands that all their owners' lives had sought only to be self-supporting, asking nothing of life but the chance to be of service to the community. Hands that had never shirked all the most disagreeable domestic duties; hands working behind counters in shops, in factories—always working, seldom folded in peace—because life had been hard for them. So hard that now, in their middle age, they found themselves thrown aside on the scrapheap, out of work, their parents dead, their homes broken up. Some of them who read this will remember how we fought on their behalf. Thank God Miss White's crusade has been rewarded. Now they are receiving the pension at sixty—and when the war is over, I pray with all my heart that, like so many other social reforms that are desperately needed, the money will be found to give them what they so richly deserve, a sanctuary at fifty-five. After all, if we can find millions of pounds every day now to win the war, surely we can find sufficient funds enough to win the next peace!

* * * * *

Peace! A sweet echo of all that word stands for came to me across the years when I saw that the Villas of Ruffolo and Cimbrone, on the Gulf of Amalfi, have been seized by order of the Italians, because they were British owned. You took the mountain road that led up from Amalfi to Ravello, where Wagner wrote his last opera, and there, at the end of the village street, you came to the famous gardens full of spring flowers, with their lawns that led right to the cliff's edge. You could sit there in the sunshine on the grass and look down at a sea as blue as crushed butterfly's wings. With the scent of freesias to perfume my nostrils, I used to dream away the afternoon, little thinking that, a few years later, all those charming villagers who used to smile at you as you passed would be our enemies. But not by their choice. I am certain of that. When Mussolini plunged his country into war, he was writing his own death warrant. I write that prophecy in my Scrapbook; only time can show whether I am right.

9TH NOVEMBER, 1940

FLYING high over a south-eastern English town, a Polish squadron of Spitfires saw a large formation of German bombers heading for London. Instantly they dived to the attack, split up the formation, sent three of the enemy's planes spinning earthwards to their doom. One German bomber tried to escape into a bank of clouds, but a young Polish airman followed him, firing until his ammunition was exhausted. By skilful manoeuvring the Pole tried to force the Nazi down. That failed. There was only one other way. Climbing above the raider,

our ally opened up his throttle, pushed forward his joy-stick, and flew straight into the enemy machine. Both 'planes crashed instantly, locked in a death grip. But the bomber's crew succeeded in baling out and landing safely, to be taken prisoner. It was the young Pole who died in the ambulance on his way to hospital. And these were his last words: "*I did get him after all. It was worth it.*"

* * * * *

It may be some consolation for us all to remember that what is happening now to London happened a thousand times worse to Warsaw in the first days of the war. Warsaw, capital of Poland, the last great beautiful city of the west where, in the golden autumn, the painted bronze leaves of the tree in the Chopin memorial used to be indistinguishable from the falling bronze leaves of the giant limes surrounding it. But last autumn the falling leaves were a host of bombs. A man who had been all through the siege, had seen the German Army march in, and Hitler come there from Danzig to look for himself upon the work he had done, has said seven terrible words. Remember them, too. He has said: "The tramlines are full of clotted blood." I cannot wash those words from the screen of my imagination. I cannot forget the title of the book I have been reading this week. It is called *My Name is Million*. The title is taken from the work of the Polish poet, Adam Mickiewicz. 'My name is Million, because I love millions, and for millions suffer torment.' The book is by an Englishwoman married to a high Polish official, and it is the story of the war as seen through Polish eyes. She has written, I consider, the greatest book of the war to date, and I hope with all my heart that it will be read by millions and passed on down the centuries. One thing is certain. Every one of us who does read it will get a true and tremendous picture of the courage and the faith and the endurance of our allies, to restore whose kingdom we ourselves originally came into the war. There is one very touching passage in the book, when the anonymous authoress says good-bye to her home in Warsaw, and closes up the cupboard in which are all her food stores. "Do you remember," she says to her maid, "when we picked over all this fruit, Irena? I told you then that we were getting it all ready for the Germans." And she continues: "Since that afternoon I have lost a great deal more than the contents of the store cupboard. But the jam and those jars of preserves still stick in my memory. It was such a hot, bright day when we bought the fruit in the market. The raspberries were so perfect. The white currant jelly took so many hours to strain. The very young green peas from the garden had bottled so well, I cannot forgive the Germans for that cupboard of mine, and for those shining coloured rows of jars and bottles. Neither do I know how to bear it when, occasionally, somebody offers me jam with my tea." She speaks, too, of the great invasion of Poland, by a new form of mechanized warfare. 'Tanks, blind, hideous, imperturbable, without will or blood-lust, even, of their own, rolling mechanically forward over the mangled beauty and ardour of men and horses.' Let us never forget, I have written in my Scrapbook that the Poles have lost so much more than we have; that their soldiers, their airmen, their sailors, who are carrying on the fight so magnificently side by side with our own men, are completely cut off from all news of their families and their homes. Yet their faith does not desert them. Far away in Scotland in their camps they have been fitted out with khaki battle-dress like our own men, but there is this difference: out of bits of tin—old biscuit tins and the like—they have fashioned replicas of the Polish eagle and proudly wear them on their shoulder straps. While with provision boxes, branches from the hedges and any other material they can scrounge, they have built themselves wayside shrines and altars. There every Sunday they celebrate Mass, kneeling in wet or storm, bare-headed in the field, in front of an image of Our Lady, 'Queen of Poland,' which may be no more than a crudely carved, painted figure of their own contrivance. But it is none the less holy for that, just as their cause is holy, and their fidelity to that cause so strong that no sacrifice is too great.

My name is Million—because our allies to-day are the souls as well as the bodies and the minds of all free peoples left in the world. Let us take new courage from that and new hope in remembering the words of our own Prime Minister, when he exhorted us as follows: "What

Hitler has done is to kindle a fire in British hearts, here and all over the world, which with glow long after all traces of the conflagrations he has caused in London have been removed. He has lighted a fire which will burn with a steady and consuming flame until the last vestige of Nazi tyranny has been burnt out of Europe, and until the Old World and the New can join hands to rebuild the temples of man's freedom and man's honour upon foundations which will not soon or easily be overthrown."

16TH NOVEMBER, 1940

WHEN the King visited the East End recently to sympathize with his people who had been bombed out of their homes, and stood shoulder to shoulder with them in the street, a man in the crowd shouted: "You are a great King." To which the King replied: "You are a great people." I have copied that out and put it at the top of a page in my Scrapbook. I feel it sums up everything we are thinking at this moment, deep down in our hearts. We are all in this together. All the harrowing, tragic, pitiful scenes that I have witnessed since the mass raids started over London—I have no intention of recording these in my Scrapbook. I feel that we all have enough to stand up to at the moment, without needing any reminders of how lucky we are still to be alive. But there is one little anecdote that, by its very simplicity and under-statement, seems to me to symbolize the magnificent spirit of millions of British women at this moment. The other day, when I was driving out of London to go and see how my mother was faring at our cottage, I was pulled up by a bomb dropping in the road a hundred yards ahead of me. As the fumes and smoke cleared away, I saw that the bomb had demolished all the fronts of a row of houses on one side of the road. There was a woman in a black coat, with a shopping basket over her arm, a few yards ahead of me. She was obviously returning from a visit to the shops. Quite calmly, she went through the front entrance of one of the houses—there was no front door left, of course—walked up the staircase that was still standing, crossed one room to another, opened a cupboard, took out some clothing and placed a suitcase on the bed, just as though she was packing to go away for the week-end. Very deliberately and quietly she filled the bag, closed its fasteners, walked back down the staircase and so out into the street. As she passed me, she gave me a smile and said: "Well, I can't sleep there to-night." That was all. And when I asked if there was anything I could do, anywhere I could take her in the car, she simply smiled again and shook her head. As I drove on, I remembered what another ordinary citizen of the front line said to me, as we sat side by side in a shelter, listening to the muffled thumps of the bombs falling round Victoria. She said: "There is a Chinese saying, 'When I'm in a storm, I open God's umbrella.'" At that moment, she added, she really felt she was sitting under an umbrella. Who would dare to smile at her childlike faith?

30TH NOVEMBER, 1940

IT is midnight. I am standing in the air-raid casualties reception ward at St. Mary's Hospital, near Paddington Station. Outside the noise is deafening. Here, within, there is an extraordinary sense of sanctuary, as the work of salvage goes on serenely hour by hour, throughout the night. As I stand watching the perfect, unruffled co-ordination between the doctors, the nurses, the surgeons carrying out emergency operations and the students lending a hand wherever they can be most useful, my mind goes back to supper that evening in the common-room, when my neighbour filled my glass from a jug in the middle of the table—with milk. "We used to have beer," he explained shortly, "but no one seemed to touch it." That was all he said, but behind his casual explanation lay a further proof, if any were needed, of the rigid discipline and devotion to duty of our hospital staffs in the front line to-day. Once again I must add a postscript. At one moment I found myself staring down at the figure of a policeman

on a stretcher. He had been hit by blast ; death must have been instantaneous. His mate, who had brought him from Edgware Road, kept on saying over and over again : "He has the next bed to me in the station house !" Hours later, as I drove myself home through the dying fires, a policeman stopped my car in Edgware Road and suggested a possible route to Victoria, in terms of that night's bombing damage. His voice was quiet and polite and anonymous, but all the same I recognized it as the voice which earlier had cried with passionate sorrow : "He has the next bed to me in the station house !"

14TH DECEMBER, 1940

YOU know those mottoes and questions-and-answers that we always used to search for eagerly in our crackers. Well, I don't suppose there will be so many about this year, so in case you'd like to provide one yourself, you might try out on your neighbour at Christmas dinner the following : What did the man say who was asked if he would contribute to the fund for buying Spitfires ? "No, thanks," he replied. "I married one !"

21ST DECEMBER, 1940

THERE'S someone I want to wish a Happy Christmas and a safe New Year. Ginger, the sergeant-pilot, the captain of the Hudson 'plane in which I flew to Norway a few weeks ago—and so very nearly did not come back. Still, we did come back, despite an air battle lasting forty minutes, when we were attacked by three Messerschmitts over Stavanger. We did come back, thanks to the coolness and courage shown by Ginger and his mates. Until you have actually made a trip with these boys, and gone into action with them, you can have no idea of the difference between them when they are off duty, laughing and kidding each other in the mess, and when they are transformed by the spur of danger.

When we got back safely from the trip an hour late, hope had almost been given up for us, because our wireless had frozen up and we had been unable to send any message. Afterwards they celebrated our escape by giving me quite a bit of a party in the mess. You would have been amused if you had been there. There were Dutch fellows and New Zealanders, Canadians and Australians, as well as our pilots and gunners. Do you know how all these officers spent their time after supper ? They had a lesson in learning to dance the Scottish reel. It was a riot, and one more example of how marvellously the R.A.F. have taught themselves the secret of relaxing when they are off duty. One of the pilots was a full-blooded Scot and he conducted the lesson, complete with the tartan of his clan, while the rest of us could only sport a handkerchief tucked in the top of our trousers as an attempt to illustrate the sporran. Unfortunately, a muddle ensued, because the chaps with handkerchiefs were told by the teacher that they had to be the girls, and as the handkerchiefs kept on falling out there was a good deal of reeling in mid-air, when the wrong parties got their arms linked !

There is also another note in my Scrapbook regarding my visit to that Scottish R.A.F. station, consisting of five words. *The pluck of the pigeons.* You see, we carried a basket of pigeons with us on our trip. In the event of our being forced down on the sea, or losing our way through the wireless giving out, these birds are ready at any instant to be dispatched with S O S messages. Well, you can tell what a rough passage they had during the flight, when the basket was being tossed all over the machine like a feather. I felt very sorry for them, but I was relieved and full of admiration when, on our eventual return, the basket was lifted out of the 'plane by one of the mechanics and I heard the pigeons inside cooing away as though they had just been fed with corn in their loft. There is a sequel to that. A few days after this trip to Stavanger I was telling a friend, who is a bomber pilot, about it, and paying a tribute to the pigeons when he added this. I think it has a message for all those people who imagine that you cannot be brave and do a tough job of work without completely de-humanizing your-

self. This boy of twenty-three, who already has won a bar to his D.F.C., said : "You've heard about Sergeant Hannah and the V.C. he won? Well, he was in our squadron, and the day after he got back a friend and I went and inspected his burnt-out machine. In it we found the charred remains of the basket of pigeons. Poor little devils, they've got such guts. So we went and gave them a proper military funeral in a nearby orchard and we got someone to pipe the Last Post over them. Why not? Hadn't they died on active service?" He did not expect an answer to that question from me, because there was no answer.

28TH DECEMBER, 1940

IT is midnight again, and I am standing on the bridge of one of our destroyers out on patrol. It is a dark and stormy night. As I grip the rail to keep my balance, a voice speaks to me out of the darkness. I cannot see the speaker's face, but I know that he is the captain of our destroyer. He is thirty-five; in peace-time he plays cricket for the Navy, and he is typical of that breed of men who, in all weathers and in all dangers, stay on the bridge and never look at their wrist-watches. His method of keeping warm is to wear a pair of white flannel trousers, and over that a pair of black corduroys, and over his head a monk's hood. Occasionally during the night he slumped for a quarter of an hour into a blue chair which might have come straight from the parlour of a seaside boarding house. It seemed so incongruous, in a way, on the bridge, and yet its presence there was so typical of life on a destroyer, life which, though no less disciplined, is less conventional than on any other Naval vessel. And now let me tell you what he said. "Have you ever been to Bredon Hill?" he asked me. Before I could answer that voice in the darkness continued, warming the icy coldness of that night: "As soon as this patrol is over, we are going on leave, and I shall be going to my home at the foot of Bredon Hill." Immediately I thought of the famous poem out of *The Shropshire Lad*, by A. E. Housman. Do you know how it goes? Let me quote it for you from my Scrapbook. It is so lovely, and so remote from that moment of communion on the bridge of the destroyer, ploughing its way through those dark, dangerous waters. Yet I shall never take up the little leather copy of the book which always sits beside my bed without remembering again that particular night of the war. But listen:

In summer-time on Bredon,
The bells they sound so clear;
Round both the shires they ring them,
In steeples far and near,
A happy noise to hear.

Here of a Sunday morning,
My love and I would lie,
And see the coloured counties,
And hear the larks so high
About us in the sky.

* * * * *

The other day the Queen, on one of her official tours, overheard someone saying that there was no precedent for something being done. She turned with her usual charming smile, and said: "Please, never let me hear that word 'precedent' again." Let that be your New Year resolution, never to argue that so-and-so cannot be done because there is no precedent for it. Just go ahead and do it.

11TH JANUARY, 1941

A MAN sat in his favourite arm-chair by the fire at the end of a long day. He was reading a book, and a passage out of it appealed to him so much that he turned to his wife and read it to her aloud. This was the passage: 'The wood was a paradise of a million primroses. They crowded everywhere, often attracting many small birds about them, all through the wood and outside of it, very big and rich in that black earth. We took baskets to gather them and with them many big white violets and countless rosy-white anemones. And later in the year came the bluebells, and later still, in the first weeks of June, the moon-daisies that were like milk along the woodside, and the meadowsweet, like the cream of summer.' Who was the man who read that passage aloud? It was Neville Chamberlain, the man who fought for peace and later was spurned by many because he gained valuable time for us at Munich. Everyone is entitled to their own point of view, but I praised him in print at the time, and I say here that one day the historians will praise him again for having made a last stand to save the world from a fate that has now been meted out to such cities as Coventry.

* * * * *

There are other ways of saying the same thing. I remember, two winters ago now, coming down in the lift at the office. I found myself with a fellow member of the staff whom I did not know at that time very well, but whom I had always liked for his friendliness towards me when I had got there as a 'new boy.' He was smiling. I asked him what was his good news, and this was his reply: "I have just got a rise and I am going to celebrate it." "How?" I asked him, thinking he would go to Paris for a week-end, or buy a new motor-car, or have a champagne party. Instead, he replied: "I have just rung up my wife and told her to buy up all the bulbs she can lay her hands on, so that we can have a wizard show in the spring." Well, another spring will soon be here and those bulbs will flower, but not for him. Not for Victor Burnett, for a short time ago the news came through that he had been killed while flying on active service in Rhodesia. And yet, just as Mrs. Chamberlain, for the rest of her life, will secretly have a picture of her husband reading to her a beautiful passage about primroses, so will the wife of this airman be able to remember her husband kneeling on the wet, dark, winter earth planting the bulbs for the spring in which he so triumphantly believed.

1ST FEBRUARY, 1941

TO-DAY IS THE TO-MORROW YOU WORRIED ABOUT YESTERDAY

I HAVE just copied that in block capitals into my Scrapbook. And I want you to remember something else. I want you to remember the place where I saw that motto written up on the wall. It was in the cabin of a Dutch ship lying in a Scottish port. I was the guest of the captain and the crew and I find it difficult to put into words my admiration for these men who, day after day, are risking their lives on the behalf of their Allies, while all the time at the back of their minds must be drumming the bitter knowledge that their own families and loved ones are shut away from them by a wall that cannot be surmounted until the war is over. In the chief engineer's cabin something else was hung up on the wall, the photos of his family, his young and lovely wife, his bonny children. They were walking hand in hand across the lawn of the charming home that used to await him when he came back from his peace-time voyages. Four pictures placed in a frame of fretwork and, in the middle, a bare space on which he had carved one word. That word was 'Waiting.'

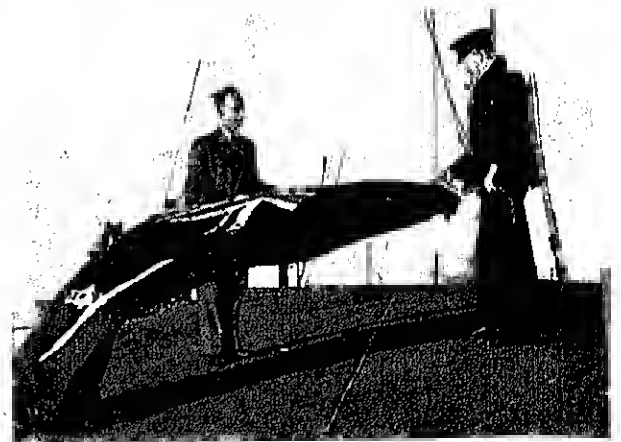
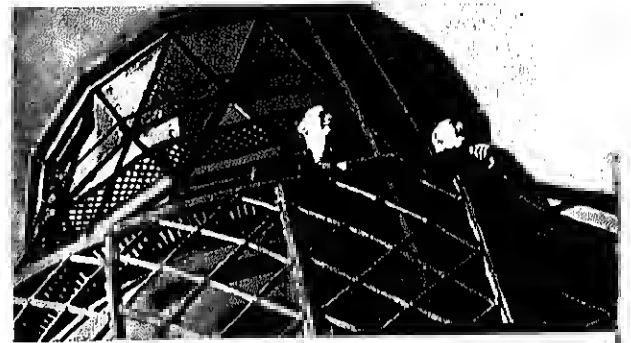
* * * * *

Before we turn over the page, here is yet another motto hung up on the wall, this time the aft of the mess of a destroyer in a Scandinavian fiord. Unfortunately, the camouflage was



On the edge of the world.

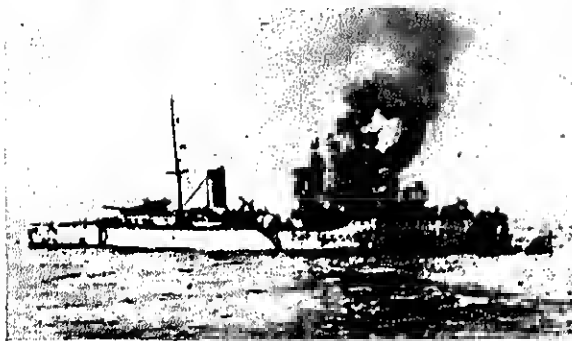
The Mull of Kintyre Lighthouse
in war-time.



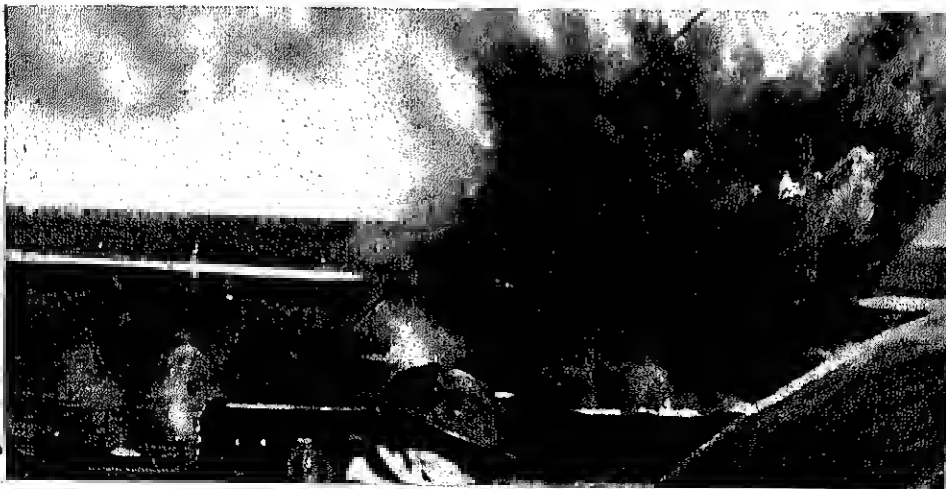
WAR AND PEACE



Mediterranean Cruise.



The *Bartolomeo Colleoni*, first Italian cruiser to be sunk in the war.





This Sapper's son, Albert—born in what was once the home of the Queen's father, Woolmer's Park.





The newly teamed up crew
of a Blenheim Bomber.



Their average age was
nineteen, and the only
thing they lacked,
they told me, was a
four-leafed clover for
luck.

Tiny, Tommy and Shorty,
now members of Churchill's
Light Brigade.



not sufficient for the destroyer to escape the notice of a German bomber. Suddenly the bombs began to fall—the bricks, as the captain of the ship called them in Naval slang. Although the ship was badly shaken up, there were no direct hits, but, instead, the bricks fell upon the cliffside overlooking the fiord. Twenty minutes later, when the officers went into their mess for lunch, they found that the steward had put up this on the wall, in red ink: AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND.

* * * * *

You may not be a Londoner, but I think you will appreciate all the same this charming little poem sent to *The Times* by an American, Mary A. Winter, who lives in Chicago, and who calls it *Tribute to a Queen*. Here it is:

London Bridge is falling down,
My fair Lady!
Be it said to your renown
That you wore your gayest gown,
Your bravest smile, and stayed in town
When London Bridge was falling down,
My fair Lady!

* * * * *

An extract from the letter of an eight-year-old child evacuated from London to a farm in Somerset. 'I have arrived safely. I like the man's face. I don't like the woman's face, but p'raps she'll look better in the morning. I like the dog's face best. Love from Johnny.'

15 TH FEBRUARY, 1941

THE barrage had lightened; the bus was moving faster through the black-out. Then suddenly its brakes screamed in a shrill, protesting whine. The conductor was whistling when he came back to tell us what had happened. He stood there, his cap pushed far back on his head. "Want to see a crater? Missed it by inches." Beside me, a girl stirred. Something made me ask her: "Is it important that you should get home so quickly?" "Well, you see— Yes, I think so! I'm being married to-morrow. So to-night, blitz or not, I want my beauty sleep." Then she went on to confide in me. She put a parcel into my hand. "It's my wedding dress," she told me. "I expect you can feel it. It's Angora." She seemed so young to be married in a sensible wool dress, and I could not help saying: "Not a white wedding? Don't you mind not having satin and bridesmaids and a veil?" "Of course I mind," she replied. I could sense that she was smiling in the darkness. "I'd always looked forward to it, but my family is in the country and his can't get there, so we're marrying in our lunch hour. Yet I feel as happy as though I were marrying Clark Gable." The bus was moving on again now. At the next stop my companion got out and, looking after her and wishing her good luck, I thought: Yes, you're both lucky to love, to brave this moment, when the bombs fall, to be happy. Then I realized I had never seen her face.

Now that is not my 'story.' I found it in a newspaper, written by a woman. It seemed such a charming cameo, so true, so close to life as we live it to-day, that I cut it out for my Scrapbook.

22 ND FEBRUARY, 1941

AND here is a letter, written by a schoolboy of fifteen to his sister, aged nine, on her departure to America. It is a letter which I should have been very proud to have written myself. 'I am writing to say good-bye and good luck to you in America and for your journey there. On the journey you must be good and obey anything you are told by Auntie. If by any chance the ship is torpedoed by a German submarine, which would

be very unlikely, you must calmly and without panic double or walk quickly to your boat station. Also don't forget your life-belt or life-jacket. And if your boat capsizes you must hang on tight, as it will float even when upside down, as its ballast tanks will keep it afloat. If anyone is down-hearted, tell them they will not drown as the Royal Navy will save them in time. Finally, in any difficulty, remember who your father was. He would not shrink from any peril or danger on land, on the sea or in the air. . . . Remember our thoughts will be with you in America, so try to write to us and we will do the same. If any American boy or girl says "England is a wet country," sock, punch, or biff them, however big they are! Don't call them rude names or anything. Don't listen to any news that says London has been razed to the ground, or that Britain has been beaten. It is obviously a German lie.'

1 ST MARCH, 1941

DO you keep a mascot always in your pocket or wear one on a chain? Because if you do—and most of us do these days—I think you will be interested in the picture I am going to draw now. Imagine yourself standing beside me in front of a fireplace in a crowded R.A.F. mess, talking to the G.O. before lunch. It is full of officers, some of them instructors, many of them with decorations pinned to their tunics, all of them men who have served their country faithfully and courageously through a period of years. They are gathered together there to look after and assist what may be to them a new generation, or at any rate a new batch of young recruits who have volunteered to be the bombing pilots of to-morrow. I had been their guest for several days. I had flown with them and watched them at work, living up to the motto of their station, *Aspice Et Imitare*. Watch and learn. Now the Group Captain is asking me what has struck me most about them, and I have replied, quite honestly, their youth—they look like schoolboys still. Smiling, he takes out his pocket-book, and this is what he says: "They're no younger than I was when I first sewed my wings upon my tunic, way back in 1917. I was only seventeen myself, and I've come through all right, just as they will. Look!" He opens his pocket-book and, tucked away under a flap, he shows me something more valuable than all the Bank of England notes in the world—the pair of wings that adorned the first tunic he ever wore on flying operations in the last war. "That's my mascot," he said to me. "I would never move an inch without it."

15 TH MARCH, 1941

IHAVE just been sticking some new snapshots into my Scrapbook. They are lovely ones, full of light and air and a sense of peace one does not often find these days. They were taken by a boy in the Fleet Air Arm, who used to work at the Denham Film Studios and was on leave in Scotland. He came with me when I visited the Mull of Kintyre Lighthouse, and spent New Year's night as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew McMillan. I have stayed in many houses all over the world, but I promise you I have never been made more to feel at home than I was that night in the white stone cluster of buildings which is perched on the edge of the headland facing the North Atlantic. The wind blew keen, the world was far away, but it did not matter because time passed swiftly, while Mr. McMillan, David Rendall, who was there learning to be a lighthouse-keeper, Georgie, the little evacuee boy from Glasgow, and myself played a card game called Bachelor. Round after round we played, and laughed tremendously whenever we succeeded in making the one married member, my host, 'bachelor.' I shall never pity them in their isolation; they have discovered the secret of happiness in life. To be content with what you have.

I would like to send a message now to David in his lighthouse tower. It is the message that was sent as a farewell by Lord Baden-Powell, found amongst his papers after his death and cabled from Nairobi. For David, at twenty-four, reminded me of a Boy Scout still, not

because he confessed he did not smoke or drink, but because of his simplicity and his kindness to the little evacuee boy. This is the message :

TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC : I have realized how much life is and how little worth while are anger and political warfare. The most worth while thing is to try to put all the happiness you can into the lives of others.

TO THE SCOUTS : Happiness does not come from being rich, nor merely from being successful in your career, nor by self-indulgence. Try to leave this world a little better than you found it, and when your turn comes to die you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time, but have done your best.

TO THE GIRL GUIDES : You will find that heaven is not the kind of happiness somewhere up in the skies after you are dead, but right here and now in this world, in your own homes.

* * * * *

Now I want you to imagine that you are sitting beside me in the darkened auditorium of Wyndham's Theatre watching *Diversion*. Two people are dancing on the stage, the man so dark, the girl so fair, in a white dress with a silver bodice, dancing with such gaiety and charm you cannot believe that last night, and to-night again, outside in the blacked-out streets, another blitz may rage. Thank you, Walter Crisham and Dorothy Dickson, for what you do every afternoon to cheer us up. Thank you for having taken a chance, all of you in the company, for having opened the theatre and made no conditions about your usual salary, only that the show should go on, so that the people should be diverted from their war-time worries. Thank you, too, Edith Evans, for your wonderful tableau, when you play Queen Elizabeth, and your voice echoes across three hundred and fifty years as you speak the historic words that she spoke to her trusted councillors, when once before England was threatened by invasion. I admire you tremendously for your technical brilliance, but I admire you most of all for something that the rest of the audience do not know. How, a few weeks ago, when they were putting on a new edition of the show, a famous actor-manager came to you and offered you an engagement at your pre-war salary to star with him, and you said without hesitation : "I cannot leave my friends here now." To which he replied : "But this is a revue, and you are a straight actress." Whereupon you looked at him very straight in the eyes and said very quietly : "I don't think you understand. These kind people took me in and asked me to be one of them, when there wasn't a theatre open in London and we had no idea whether we should run for a week or a year. Now that we have turned the show into a success, together—do you think I am going to leave them?"

22ND MARCH, 1941

I HAVE just been paying a return visit to a minesweeper.

I was very grateful for something on board. That was the cup of boiling hot soup everyone of us had each morning, as our clevenses. Without exaggeration, it was as good a soup as I have had anywhere, in any country, including France. So I asked cook for his secret. "I use fresh meat bones," he said, "as the foundation for my stock. First thing in the morning I take bones from the men's meat ration and use those bones for the soup, plus plenty of vegetables and seasoning. I'm not afraid of using the pepper-pot. Most cooks under-flavour soup, and seem frightened to use condiments as though they were dealing with gunpowder." Well, there's some domestic advice from a cook in a minesweeper.

* * * * *

Stuck on a board on a pile of rubble that was once a home with a garden is the following epitaph : "This house belonged to my wife, eighty-two, and to myself, eighty-four. It was bought with a great deal of self-sacrifice and self-denial, and we intended to leave it to our

two unmarried daughters, one of whom is unable to earn her own living. We have no thought of malice or vengeance to the men responsible for this, but all I can say is, "May God have mercy upon their souls."

5TH APRIL, 1941

YOU and I are in the air, flying in a Blenheim across country. You are sitting on the second pilot's seat. Just beside you is the lever you would release if we were bombing Germany, but at this moment, instead, we are sailing over the roof-tops of Reading, returning from a reconnaissance flight, floating on into the setting sun, six thousand feet nearer heaven than earth-bound mortals. Now, an hour later, we have landed safely, and our pilot has taken off his helmet and his fair hair is blowing in the wind. Our pilots very seldom put grease on their hair, because they say it makes their helmets sticky. "Will you excuse me," he says, "if I rush off and telephone my wife?" "Of course," I reply. "She must be nervous and want to know that you have landed again all right." "Oh, no, it's not that," he answered, "she's got used to it now. But, as a matter of fact, she is having a baby to-day, our first, and I did rather want to know how she is getting on." He spoke so casually, with the understatement for which the Air Force is famous. But as he walked away, and was lost in the distance against the hangars, I thought how, up in the air he had done his job, without showing me, by word or sign, the anxiety, the expectation and the love for his bride which must have been flooding his mind during our flight.

* * * * *

Now we are on the south coast, the guests for a few days of the General who is in charge of all our defence batteries, placed there against invasion threat. It was a great privilege for me to be shown the same secrets as Mr. Churchill recently examined, and, though we cannot talk about them, we can pass on something which the General said to me, which will stay in my mind always. I had just walked away from one of the great guns and was warming myself in front of the stove in the gun shelter, where the crew congregate between periods of standing to. They had placed pictures of film stars and cuties on the walls, cut out of magazines, and once again I was struck by man's eternal preoccupation to make a home for himself. "Yes," said the General, "they look upon this as perhaps their last home. They have no false illusions. They know what their orders are—that, should the invasion become a reality, they will fight with their guns until the last shell has been fired, then they will take their rifles and fight with them until the last round of ammunition has been expended, and then, if necessary, they will use their bayonets and their bare fists. If all else should fail, they will perish at the last beside their guns."

26TH APRIL, 1941

IT was headed: 'The Spirit Which Won the Last War,' and it was a copy of an Army Order found in a pill-box at Paschendale, scene of ghastly slaughter, where there were 50,000 casualties in a single day. This was the order.

SPECIAL ORDERS TO NO. 1 SECTION, 13.8.18.

1. This position will be held, and the Section will remain here until relieved.
2. The enemy cannot be allowed to interfere with this programme.
3. If the Section cannot remain here alive, it will remain here dead, but in any case it will remain here.
4. Should any man through shell shock, or other such cause, attempt to surrender, he will stay here dead.
5. Should all guns be blown out, the Section will use Mills grenades, and other novelties.
6. Finally, the position as stated will be held.

F. P. BETHUNE, LT.,
O/C No. 1 Section.

* * * * *

Here is a war-time riddle. It was asked the other day at a wedding reception at Leatherhead. The penalty for not finding the right answer was one penny, to go to the Red Cross—an excellent idea. This was the riddle: What does a mother grieve most about nowadays when marriage takes away her son? No fewer than eighty-four guests tried to guess it, but they all got it wrong and had to pay up seven shillings between them. Then the solution was announced. Have you guessed right yourself, I wonder. *His ration book.*

10TH MAY, 1941

IF I ever get a mood again of feeling sorry for myself, I shall think back to the afternoon when I visited the Chelsea Hospice run by the Red Cross for old folk who have been bombed out of their homes. One of the new friends I made that afternoon was Emma McCoy. Just think of it. No less than three times has Emma McCoy been bombed out of her home, and still unperturbed she looks forward to her next birthday, as though turning over a page into a new life. Her next birthday, when she will be eighty-four. And she can still sit up in bed without a pillow behind her to make her back straight, and smile upon the stranger, and call him "My dear." Her smile went with me when I left this sanctuary, so efficiently and sympathetically run by its Commandant. I should like to quote a paragraph from the official report: 'Eighty-three years old, living alone in a high tenement building, she escaped with great difficulty when the building was bombed, having received a terrible gash in the head. She came here after a week in hospital, having no relations to look after her, and was severely shocked, but refused to go to the country. After six weeks, she was rehoused, with her canary which was rescued from the debris.'

* * * * *

Again and again I have met people who at first sight seem to possess an attractive personality, and then the spell is instantly shattered the moment they open their mouths. All this was in my thoughts the other day when I sat in a B.B.C. studio and listened to someone, whose voice is a daily familiarity to millions, doing a recording for a broadcast in which I was also taking part. You may have heard it the other Sunday night—another of Leslie Bailey's brilliant Scrapbooks—"Things Worth Remembering." And if you did, you will know that I am referring to the voice of Alvar Liddell, who was asked to choose what three books he would take with him if he knew that he was going to be posted, for an indefinite period, to an isolated defence post on the coast. He answered: *Hans Anderson's Fairy Tales*, *Finnigan's Wake*, by James Joyce, and the Bible. But even more than in his choice of mental solaces in such circumstances I was interested in the infinite trouble he took over the broadcast. So far from being bored or self-satisfied, he asked repeatedly for the records to be played back, so that he could sit and criticize even the slightest intonation that he thought might be improved. Criticism, mark you, not of the amateur, myself, but of the expert professional, himself. Like all other really successful men and women, he is ruthlessly self-critical, tireless in his search for perfection. Next time you hear over the air the familiar words: "This is the news and this is Alvar Liddell reading it," remember the picture I have drawn of a tall, good-looking man in a sports coat and grey flannel trousers, nervously fingering the stem of a pipe. He was like a schoolboy waiting to hear his first examination results read out, as he sat in a chair and listened to the record coming back at us through the amplifier. I can assure you I learnt a lesson myself that afternoon, not only in voice production, but in self-production.

* * * * *

And now a party. It was quite unlike any other party I have been to, and yet it will stay in my memory far longer than any of the slap-up affairs in the West End that one used to be asked to in the days of peace. It was a party for two, for myself and girl friend—but my girl

friend was old enough to be my grandmother, and we had made friends through sharing the instalments of this Scrapbook. Her name is Mrs. Kingsbury, but she allows me to call her Molly. She writes to me every week, and her letters have meant so much to me—I cannot tell you how much. Very early in the war, one afternoon when I was down, feeling that all the things I had written about in peace-time no longer had any meaning, any reality, and that there was no niche for me as a writer in the war, Molly—or Mrs. Kingsbury as she then was to me—came and had tea with me at my flat. And I told her my troubles, my sense of frustration and feeling lost. She took my hand, this sweet, gentle old lady who looks like a robin, and told me how all her life she had put her trust in God, and believed that He guided her and led her to her destiny, as He leads all human beings to theirs. And suddenly, from her hand holding mine, I felt new strength pour into me, new courage, new hope. She said: "Wait for a sign. If you believe it will come, it will." And she went away. A few days later I was summoned by someone high up at the War Office and given my marching orders to go out to France, and from that moment I have been in the thick of things, on land, at sea, in the air. I have found my niche in the war effort, and I shall always believe if Molly had not come to tea that day I might have made an awful mess of things. So the party was not only a reunion, it was a kind of celebration, and it was held in Molly's room under the roof of a house in Elgin Terrace. We had a delicious supper. We drank cider and we started off with sardines on toast. And then Molly had made a wonderful salad, which included—I could hardly believe my eyes—two hard-boiled eggs. We ended up with a Christmas pudding which Molly had kept for months for the occasion. "I hope you won't mind," she said, "there's no lucky threepenny-bit in it." I replied: "No, I don't mind, because you've brought me all the luck I want." In the last war Molly was Matron of a hospital at Woolwich, and even to-day no one calls on her in vain who is ill or in trouble. And that, I suppose, is why she gives forth such an aura of overwhelming happiness, because she is always thinking of other people and never of herself. She is the mascot of the whole house. When the sirens go, it is she who goes from room to room, comforting anyone who is nervous. She has even volunteered for fire-watching on the roof, and showed me where the step-ladders go up just outside her room.

* * * * *

A party, and now a poem; it is called *The White Cliffs*. Published by Methuen's, you can buy it for half a crown, well spent. The author is an American who came to England just before the last war, and married an Englishman. She gave her husband to his country and now has had to endure the same poignant sense of loss when her son, her English son, has gone off to the war to follow in his father's footsteps. I would like to quote the last stanza from this most moving and memorable poem by Alice Duer Miller:

'I am American bred,
I have seen much to hate here—much to forgive,
But in a world where England is finished and dead,
I do not wish to live.'

24TH MAY, 1941

AND now I have another snapshot for my Scrapbook. It is one full of the light and shade of sunshine in the noon of a summer's day, transforming into beauty immemorial stone which has outlasted all storms, from those dim ages of which we know so little—only that upon Salisbury Plain there stands to-day the Druids' Circle which we call Stonehenge. This picture taken from the air was given to me, strangely enough, by a Hungarian pilot whom I met at a R.A.F. station, the only Hungarian, I imagine, to be fighting on our side in the air at this moment. We spoke together of his beloved Budapest, where I once spent the best summer holiday of my life; of the Danube, more grey than blue, but beautiful nevertheless;

of the lights which come out like stars on the hillside on both sides of the river at night; of the cafés where the gypsies play Zigeuner music, of the great white ballroom with its silver chandeliers in the Hapsburg Palace, of the miles and miles of giant sunflowers in the plains outside the city, of the geranium flowers that the men wear in their black hats on Sundays when they are courting. Then he opened his pocket-book, and, instead of giving me a picture of his own native city, as I expected, he handed me this photograph which he had taken from his plane, of a famous historical spot in his adopted country. If you visit Stonehenge this summer, as well you may, think for a moment of that boy, an exile from his own homeland inevitably until the war is over, flying up there in the peaceful-looking azure sky, on patrol, so as to make it possible for you to sit in the shade of one of the stone columns.

7TH JUNE, 1941

THE other day I paid a visit to Lloyds. After the tour was over my companions took me to lunch, a little reunion party between the host, who was now in Naval uniform, and his underwriting friends. So that we should not be disturbed, the cloth was laid on a table in the cellar of a famous City restaurant, Simpson's. And all round us were stacked against the walls dozens of precious wine bottles and liquors, with dust and cobwebs on them. Don't worry, we didn't disturb their rest. But as my eyes passed from shelf to shelf, suddenly a shutter flew open in my mind and another picture presented itself. I was sitting beside the bed of one of the wounded Guards, last June, after the evacuation from Dunkirk. He was telling me how, the night before they were taken off by a destroyer, he and the rest of his platoon were ordered to take cover from the bombing in a cellar, which happened to be a wine storehouse. "That was lucky for you," I suggested jokingly. At once the boy in bed contradicted me. I shall always remember his words as an example of what discipline can be. This is what the boy said: "We had had no grub for twenty-four hours, and we were pretty thirsty, too, but we reckoned it out like this. If we drink any of the brandy or the other stuff in the bottles it might go to our heads because of our empty bellies. And we knew, of course, what we were in for when we were taken off the quay the next day, and we wanted to be sure that we'd go off as rigid-like as though we were on the parade ground at home in peace-time." I said nothing. There was nothing I could say.

14TH JUNE, 1941

LAST night I saw the new moon through glass, and shivered. I could not help myself. I have always had childish superstitions like that and, you see, to-morrow I am off to sea again, this time in a corvette. This is one of the small sloops that guard our convoys, far out into the Atlantic, from the attacks of U-boats—and so often are sunk themselves. But I am not going to bore you with gloomy forebodings. I am going to tell you about a friend of mine, who is as superstitious as I am, and also a great believer in the scientific reading of the palms of one's hands. Whenever in the past my friend had his hand read, all the consultant would say about the curious abrupt end to his life line was this: "In the near future you are going to have a very great shock. If you survive that, your life line will start to grow again, you will live a long time." Well, he had the great shock all right. Not long ago he was sitting reading a book in the hall of a large building in London one evening when suddenly a bomb crashed through the roof and fell in the corridor only a few feet from his sofa. He was hurled into space, but picked himself up a few minutes later, completely unhurt. A few days later, glancing at his hand, he was astonished to see his life line *had started to grow*. Seeing my face when he told me that, he showed me a photograph of his right hand taken just before the war and then compared that unfakeable evidence with his hand. There was the proof—so that I was compelled to go away convinced. And yet?

5TH JULY, 1941

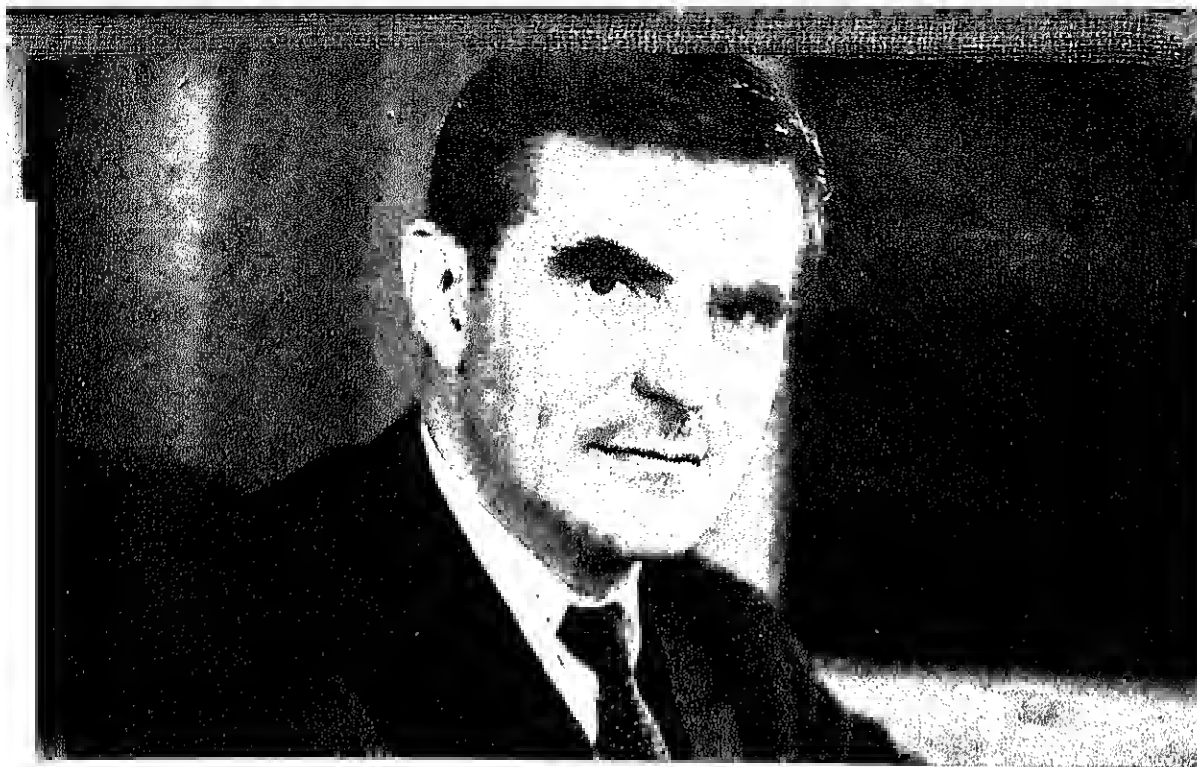
JUST had a hot shower—we get one per week, on Saturdays—and have been planting out some lettuces. We have taken over the garden and I am head gardener with eleven assistants. We are allowed in it between 9.0–11.30, so it helps pass the morning and provides some exercise. *Sunday.* I am sitting against the wall outside the castle smoking my pipe, full up with a meal of beef and potatoes, Sunday being a feast day. Up at 8, breakfast at 9. We had a short service at 10.0, including the twenty-seventh Psalm, which seemed very appropriate. I hope to get hold of some more lettuce plants to put in this afternoon. Do you need to have three guesses as to the author of this letter? Yes, right first time—it's from a prisoner of war, and he writes from Oflag IXA. I quote his letter for two reasons: first, because I think it's a tonic for us at home to see how cheerfully he writes; and, secondly, because I feel that many of the readers of my Scrapbook may have relatives or friends who are prisoners of war and be glad of the opportunity to compare this letter with their own. Of course, conditions differ from camp to camp, but the other day I had a long talk with someone who is in a position to make an objective, neutral statement on the subject. He assured me that conditions for prisoners of war in Germany are on the whole better than they were in the last war. I pray God that it is so.

Meanwhile, here are one or two hints that may be useful if you are writing or sending parcels to prisoners. If possible, have your letter typed, as it has to be censored. The typing will facilitate the dispatch. If you can't borrow a typewriter, do take care to write *very* legibly. Try to make him feel that you are in the room with him. Above all, get 'pictures' into your letter. I'll give you an example of what I mean. Someone wrote this the other day of their home country: 'I slip out down the lanes here into the fresh air. The banks are warm with flowers, there's pussy palm and cotton grass, there are stretches and stretches of heather. . . and the walls are hot with sun.' Don't you see what that will mean to him, if he once knew that country well? Don't imagine that it will make him unhappy if you describe the places that were once his favourite haunts. Not a bit of it. The pictures you re-create, because of your shared memories, will bring you so much closer together. Now, lastly, did you know that you can now send a 'personal' parcel once every three months to a prisoner? The parcel must not weigh more than ten pounds, they must not contain food, and they cannot be dispatched direct by you to him. But if you go to your nearest post office and ask them for a copy of the pamphlet P.2,280E, that will give you full particulars. Prisoners of war must long sometimes for some quite ordinary thing which has become, through their captivity, the symbol to them of all that is luxurious and wonderful.

26TH JULY, 1941

THE war rolls on. As each page is turned over, do not let us forget what has gone before—the miracle, and the magnificence, too, of the sacrifices that have been made on our behalf. Already the Grecian campaigns and the defence of Crete are closed books. Here is a poem I have learnt by heart, written by the Australian broadcaster, Colin Will. It is called, simply, *Crete*.

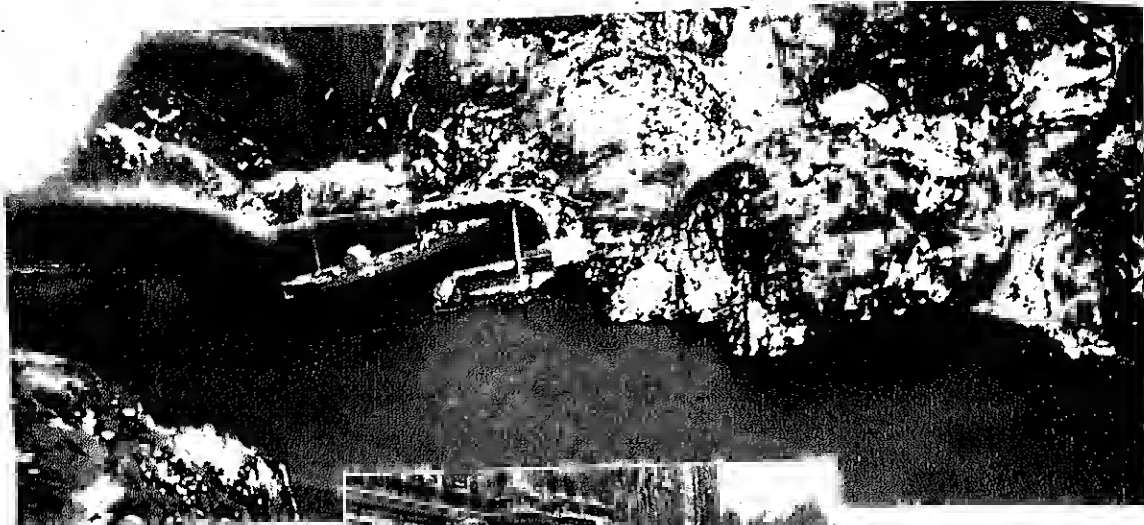
Vengeance brings no one back, and dries no tears;
Nor heals one wound, nor one heart's bitterness.
Yet they shall be avenged—all their lost years,
All that they suffered. We can do no less.
It was not for an island that they died,
But for a world—a world where men are free.
Let the world well remember that they cried:



John Winant, American Ambassador to our shores, gave me this picture for my Scrapbook.



On the bridge of a North Sea convoy : the hour before the dawn.



'Ginger' Bailey, Hudson pilot, with his wife after he had received the D.F.M. at Buckingham Palace. I was given, as a memento of the same trip, the other two pictures on this page.



This photograph (and the one at top of page) first revealed the hiding-place of the Altmark, and were taken by members of the same Hudson-squadron.



Mrs. Patterson, woman pilot of the A.T.A., has one sort of war job

Granny, in a Midlands factory, another, and (below) Miss Anne Osborne, glass-etching, yet another.



M.L.s in the St. Nazaire raid.



Frank Scott, ex-policeman from Leeds, now serving as air crew in the R.A.F. "My favourite tune is the National Anthem," he said.



...ator Fleming, of the Cameron Highlanders, wounded at Dunkirk. Where is he serving now

'Give us machines!' And let that grim call be
Our watchword. Steel for steel, and flame for flame:
Fury for all Hell's fury. Thus the slain
Who held the rocks of Crete in Freedom's name
Through those black hours shall not have died in vain.

Will you do something for me? If you work in any kind of war factory, or know someone who is doing so, will you cut this poem out and stick it up where it can be seen, every night, every morning. Then learn it off by heart as I have done, as a constant reminder, a constant clarion call to even greater endeavour.

This is not the first time in their history that the Greeks themselves have won immortal fame. In your school books you probably read, as I did, the story of the handful of Spartans who held the pass of Thermopylae against overwhelming odds, knowing before they went into battle that there could be only one end for each of them. But when the history of this war comes to be written, I hope the writers will not forget to add another page to their glory: a page concerned with a further handful of guards, who stood upon the heights of the Parthenon overlooking Athens—the Parthenon, most exquisite of all Greece's ancient monuments, a source of pilgrimage of beauty-lovers from all over the world. But this time the visitors did not come with guide books in their hands—instead, they were dressed in the monstrous uniforms of paratroops with tommy-guns at their hips. And as that handful of guards saw them darkening the sun, destroying the beauty of their heritage, rather than have the humiliation of surrendering to the barbarians, they wrapped themselves, each one, in their national flag. Then with a silent farewell to all the loveliness that was ancient Greece, and all their expectation of future joy, they jumped over the cliffs, preferring that escape to seeing the Germans in possession of all they held sacred and dear.

2ND AUGUST, 1941

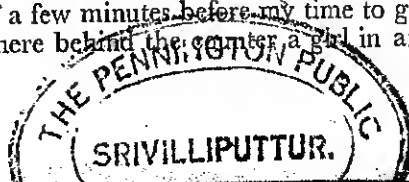
DID you know that in peace-time the future Queen of England always bought herself regularly every Saturday a quarter of a pound of chocolates out of her pocket money? But now she has had to give that up, to balance her weekly budget. For out of her official State allowance Princess Elizabeth only receives five shillings a week pocket money! That may seem quite a tidy sum till you hear how she disposes of it. First, a shilling goes to the National Savings Scheme Club run in the Royal Household: sixpence to the Red Cross; sixpence to the household fund for buying materials for the working party that makes comforts for the troops; and, finally, another shilling to the Princess's special 'cause of the week.' I don't know what little Margaret Rose receives, but I should think she has to do even more complicated sums than her elder sister to make her pocket-money last out the week!

16TH AUGUST, 1941

IT is half-past four in the morning. The dawn is breaking over London. Come with me. You will be intrigued when I tell you where we are going. The B.B.C., to broadcast to America. Recently I have been chosen on more than one occasion to give the talk in the 'Calling the World' series, which goes out on the Empire wavelength and is heard by the whole of the American Continent, as well as Canada and South America, at their peak listening hour of the evening, round about 10 p.m. There is, as you know, over a six-hour lag in time between the two countries. That is why it is half-past four in the morning when my car brakes beside the pavement in Portland Place, and the next moment we find ourselves being challenged by the Home Guard on duty. We go to the desk and fill in a pink form. Only when that has been countersigned will someone take us down, down into the catacombs, where all night long studios are working at full pressure. There is a wait of a few minutes before my time to go on the air. So my guide takes me into the canteen, where behind the counter a girl in an

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overall, looking as fresh as though she had just got up, serves us. Although I have done it many times now, I never cease to have a sinking feeling in my stomach as the clock on the wall of the studio ticks the last few seconds to zero hour. At my right is sitting the announcer in pyjamas and a silk dressing-gown. As he begins the announcement, I cannot help envying him his beautifully modulated, vibrant voice. I moisten my lips. A picture flashes through my mind of all the millions of different people in different parts of the American Continent who may be listening at that moment, Chicago, San Francisco, New York, Rio de Janeiro, Washington, Toronto, and that place which is like a sneeze—Saskatchewan. I take a deep breath—I'm off. Oh, God, let me not make a muck of it. And then aloud I can hear my voice, like the voice of a stranger, remote and detached, starting off.

After the broadcast I went home and slept late. When I got up it was a glorious day and I thought that as I was late already for the office there was no harm in being a bit later, and I walked through the park, dawdling when I came to my favourite view in all London. Buckingham Palace is just behind us, and across the wide square in front of the gates, which as you know have been blitzed a bit, we stand on the pavement by the parapet which looks out across St. James's Park towards Whitehall. The trees are now the deep, dark green of late summer; they make an exquisite frame for the roofs in the distance, which are like a lot of fairy bubbles, a collection of minarets, floating deliciously and delicately in the noon-day haze. Whatever else has been destroyed of bricks and mortar in our beloved capital, that perfect view, which to me represents the very heart of London's beauty, still remains untouched. Go and gaze upon it if you can; you will feel refreshed and uplifted in spirit.

* * * * *

And now I want to tell you a story, too, that I think will make you feel proud of your heritage. A story which is linked up with London's bricks and mortar, too. The story of a little square near Euston, Holford Square, tragically blasted in a recent blitz. In the square was an A.R.P. post. And that night one of the volunteer wardens, Alf Mead, who was only twenty-one, and superintendent of 'C' shift of the Finsbury A.R.P. control, was smitten down and taken to the Royal Free Hospital. All his life he had been a victim of asthma, and he smiled bravely at his mother and said: "This won't kill me. I've been through worse than this." But she knew better. He held on for two days, and then, at three o'clock in the morning, the voice that had whistled or hummed unceasingly his favourite melody, *Only for Ever*, suddenly said strongly and firmly: "Girls, have your pads and pencils ready." Then, "Carry on," he said. And that was all.

23RD AUGUST, 1941

ON a recent evening in the middle of a speaking tour for the Ministry of Information I stepped aside for a moment, and slept in an R.A.F. station, where a friend of mine is the C.O. of a night-fighter squadron. It was miles from anywhere, somewhere in the west. Grey camouflaged hangars. A few uncompromising huts. No comfort. No colour. Except on a bank beside the entrance gates, a flaming patch of wild poppies. And instantly my mind remembered the famous lines written after the last war. *'If ye break faith with us who die we shall not sleep though poppies grow in Flanders fields.'* And now a new generation goes into battle in new ways. And the poppies flower on the banks beside the aerodromes. And will we forget, I thought, as at midnight I sat in the crew-room, all shadowy because of the one dim light, so that the pilots should get used to the darkness before they took off in their Beaufighters on patrol? Such a simple, peaceful scene; a dart-board in one corner—someone eating bacon and eggs—someone else discussing the shortage of cigarettes—no one talking about the sound that dominated all our minds, the sound not of bells this time, but of the machines landing and taking off on the ghostly flare-path outside, the eternal drone of aircraft in the heavens above. How many of these boys will still be there a year from now, when the poppies flower again? No, we must not forget—this time.

30TH AUGUST, 1941

TWO women stand side by side in the hall of a large house that was once an hotel and is now a training centre. One is tall and elegant, and is wearing a flowered summer dress. She has a sweet manner, a gentle voice—you like her instantly. The other is small and fair and her dress is just as pretty. It is black, with touches of white at the wrist and the neck and two little pockets. They are smiling at each other, holding each other's hand, and their names are Lady Buckmaster and Mrs. Lawson from Warrington. The taller woman speaks. This is what she says: "Oh, I do like your dress so much, and you've done your hair beautifully. It looks perfectly charming. Every time I see you looking so well turned out, I feel I must go off and look at myself in the mirror." I am not ashamed to admit that tears came to my own eyes as I overheard that scrap of conversation, for I knew that Mrs. Lawson could never look into a mirror again. And she did look so smart, so fresh and *soignée*, she put to shame every woman who in war-time gives up trying to make the most of her appearance. Afterwards, Lady Buckmaster, who is one of the voluntary helpers at the St. Dunstan's Home at Church Stretton, told me how Mrs. Lawson came to be there. Her husband and her little girl were all blinded by the same bomb, and the authorities quite rightly felt that they ought to keep all the family together for the time being. And Mrs. Lawson can still smile. That is the miracle. She is finding a way back to life, just like all the other inmates of St. Dunstan's.

And this is the song that they sing when they are taken for an expedition in a bus. This is what they sing in chorus, smiling as Mrs. Lawson smiled.

'Here we are again, As happy as can be,
All good friends, And jolly good company.'

* * * * *

And now, in contrast, another sketch of two women, side by side, in the ward of a Maternity Home in Hertfordshire. No mother could want a more beautiful spot in which to have her first-born. For this spacious, gentle house, with its lovely gardens, was once the home of the Queen of England's father, and now it is inhabited by East End mothers, such as the one whom you see in the picture. She was snapped with her baby, Albert, her husband who is a sapper, and the matron, Miss Ireland, from the London Hospital. This picture proves that democracy does stand for more than an impossible ideal, when you think that such a home has been voluntarily evacuated by its owner, so that blitzed-out mothers from places like Bethnal Green may have their babies in security and comfort. And that while they wait their time they may rest in the sitting-room, with its balcony overlooking the lawns and the cedar trees. It was this charming and restful room in which our own beloved Queen Elizabeth always slept whenever she came on a private visit to her father.

6TH SEPTEMBER, 1941

THE blue jacket of a young R.A.F. cadet, training to be an air observer. Why does that find a place in my Scrapbook? Well, you remember the famous incident when Raleigh took off his cloak for Queen Elizabeth? Smilingly, I thought of that when I was flying the other day in a Botha with three air observers of to-morrow, watching them drop dummy bombs on to a wooden target attached to a buoy at sea. They must have noticed my envious glances, because they suddenly suggested that I should have a 'go.' I was just about to fall down full length beside the pilot and look through the lens of the bomb aimer when one boy took off his jacket and put it down for me to lie on—I suppose he thought the fuselage a bit hard for the 'new boy.' A tiny incident, of no importance except to myself? Yes, I know some would dismiss it as that. But to me it is important, because it typifies the universal good manners of every member of the R.A.F. to-day.

Our reunion party ended with a visit to the best show I have seen since the war began—*Black Vanities*, at the Victoria Palace. I have never seen Flanagan and Allen in better form, and as for Frances Day—well, I took 'Ginger' and his wife round to see her in her dressing-room afterwards and they both thought she looked even lovelier close to. Frances gave us both photographs—mine is reproduced in my Scrapbook—and I asked her how she had enjoyed her holiday of a fortnight's break in the run of the show. "Oh, very much, thank you, Godfrey." I waited, but she did not go on, so let me continue the story for her. I happen to know that she spent the whole of her only fortnight's holiday, since the war began, sitting by the bedside of a friend in the R.A.F. who had crashed on his return from a bombing raid over Berlin. She just sat and willed him back to life and the doctors say that it is entirely due to her that he is convalescing to-day. How many other actresses would have published that story, for their own benefit? Frances did not even tell a close friend like myself of her unselfishness. That is the sort of girl she is. Quite frankly I am devoted to her and always will be, because there are few women so talented and so lovely as she is, who are so unspoilt.

8TH NOVEMBER, 1941

TO-DAY I received a letter from Mrs. Mason, who lives at 73, Grayshott Road, Clapham Junction:

'Dear Godfrey Winn—To-day is my sixth wedding anniversary. They have been the happiest years I have ever known, marred by only one thing, separation from my husband, through this war, like many others. The day I was married I carried a bunch of red roses, and my husband always told me that no matter where he was he would always send me roses on our anniversary. This year they came just the same, each one a token of his love and devotion that has never wavered. From every bunch he sends me I keep one rose, and as the years go by they will always remind me of each happy year we have known.'

Did I not read in the paper to-day, how in a recent raid an R.A.F. pilot dropped an English emblem on enemy territory—a rose from the garden outside his squadron's headquarters? And did I not read something else, too, which I reprint here in my Scrapbook, because I think it will appeal to all garden lovers, and not only garden owners, but to all of us who need to be reminded that, although the November gales blow the last of the leaves off the trees, there *will* be another spring, another burgeoning—fresh beauty will blossom once more over the bomb craters?

If you want roses from your own garden in winter, go round the beds in summer in the early part of the day, when the dew has all dried from the rosebuds, and select from those just showing colour. Cut them with a sharp knife, leaving as long a stem as possible. Have ready some melted wax, and immediately dip the cut stems into this. Allow the wax to set; then wrap the buds in tissue paper and pack them in a box. Put the box into a dry, cool place where there is no danger of frost. When the rosebuds are wanted, unwrap them, cut off the waxed ends, and put them in tepid water. The buds will gradually open, and be as fresh as if newly gathered.

22ND NOVEMBER, 1941

NEITHER snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed round. I want you to copy these words into your Scrapbook and learn them off by heart. I have been saying them over and over again to myself this afternoon, as I lie in bed and curse my present inactivity. But these words comfort me. They are part of a memory of when I was just starting out on a consignment, sailing in a convoy down the English Channel, which, never forget, *still belongs to us*. And these words were framed over

the desk of the Admiral at the base. I asked him for their origin, and he told me that years ago he had seen them over the lintel of the main Post Office in New York. Well, now that America has decided at last 'to shoot on sight,' the words have assumed a double symbolism.

6TH DECEMBER, 1941

IT is Sunday, the hour when, in churches all over the land, men who have dedicated their lives are preaching to those gathered together in His Name. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, no device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.* A few Sundays ago these wise and beautiful words from Ecclesiastes echoed down the nave of the church of St. Mary's, Southend. Their speaker was Pilot Officer the Rev. A. R. Fitch, reading the Lesson during a brief respite from his duties as a bomber pilot. It was those same words which inspired the young curate to go to his vicar, Archdeacon Gowing, on the day that France collapsed, and say: "I would like to leave the church and be trained as an R.A.F. pilot. I am taking this step with my eyes open. I know what it means for an ordained man to join the fighting forces, but I am only twenty-five, and I feel it is my duty." So he left his church, and after his training was over he made many successful raids on Germany. Twice his machine was hit by flak and twice he brought the machine back safely, though badly damaged. Between raids, he would often go home to his old church and read the Lessons, and then a few hours later be in the air again heading for his 'target for to-night.' And then the time came when he did not return. His bomber was hit by flak for the third time. Once again Fitch nursed it back across the North Sea to the East Coast, only a few miles from his home town. The engines sputtered, the pilot knew that he must get the machine down quickly, but he could not do that because he was over a town. Rather than endanger the lives of those down below, he shouted to his crew to bale out, while he held that machine steady for them, and the next second he turned and was heading out into the North Sea, safeguarding the safety of those below. Before he could bale out himself, his machine broke in half and plunged into the sea. He had kept his vows to the very end. He had lived and died like Christ.

25TH DECEMBER, 1941

THERE is a little club situated in a basement off St. James's Street of which I was very proud to be made a member a few weeks ago. It is the club of the Free French, and its honorary and honoured members are the men and women who have escaped to the sanctuary of our shores, and who are consumed with the same passionate longing to free their mother country from the yoke of the common enemy. Here in the basement the white-washed walls are decorated with brilliant coloured railway posters of famous French holiday resorts like Saint Raphael, to remind them of their happier past. They gather together and drink a silent toast, not only to their memories, but also to the newcomers in their midst. And what wonderful stories the newcomers have to tell, of how one morning they took their destiny in their hands and put their little fishing skiff to sea and prayed to the *Bon Dieu* to guide them safely across the Channel to this island fortress. In doing this they risked more than their lives. On Christmas Day, in this tiny close community, they do not speak of what is in their minds and in their hearts, these men and women in so many uniforms, but all have the same thoughts—my mother, my wife, my children, how are they faring? But I must speak of it in my Scrapbook, because never forget that it is the same for the Norwegians, the Greeks, the Czechs, the Poles, the Dutch, the Belgians. Think of them as you raise your glass, and then perhaps, if you are lonely yourself because your loved ones are far away in the front line somewhere, your own burden will be a little eased.

3RD JANUARY, 1942

THE last liberty boat is leaving the shore. The convoy boys, who had a few hours' respite from their eternal battling with Atlantic seas, are going back to their ship out there somewhere in the darkness of the bay, to sail at midnight. I am with them. Some of them are singing the signature tune of the ship, with its refrain:

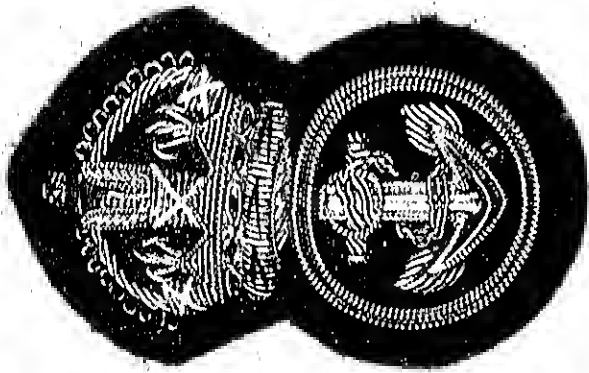
*I'm so happy, happy as a king,
I've got sixpence, jolly, jolly sixpence,
I've got sixpence to last me all my life.
I've got tuppence to spend, and tuppence to lend,
And tuppence to send home to my wife.*

Bless their hearts, I thought, what a symbol that tune is of their whole lives. For what benefit is all the money in the world to these men, when they are far out there, at the mercy of enemy submarines and attacks by day from Focke-Wulf Condors? They have the only true philosophy, to snatch happiness when and how they can find it. A few hours on shore and then back again to the job. And not worrying, not thinking, of what the new year may have in store for them, but instead holding on to this moment, so that whatever happens they can look back and say: "I was happy then, and who cares if I've only got sixpence in my pocket now?" I walk past the sentries at the gate, and in the shadows are couples clinging desperately to each other for one last embrace. "I'll see you next time we're in port, Maggie," I heard one boy repeat over and over again, as though by its very repetition there was some magic in the formula that would stay the parting boat.

1ST FEBRUARY, 1942

THERE was a dance the other day in London, and a group of W.A.A.F.s walked up to three girls not in uniform and presented each of them with a white feather. Without answering, their pleasure for the evening completely spoilt, those three girls turned slowly away. May I speak for them? They were all trunk telephonists. All through the London blitzes last year they kept going a vital trunk line switchboard, when a huge bomb lay practically on their doorstep. They knew that it might explode at any moment. If it had done so, there would have been little left of that neighbourhood. . . . Three feathers. . . . I would have said myself—three heroines!

Let me give you another example. The other day a friend of mine who is a Spitfire pilot came up to London on twenty-four hours' leave. He changed into mufti, simply because it is a change for these boys to get out of uniform. He was looking in a shop window in Piccadilly when a massive female, with an umbrella like a rifle, bore down on him, tapped him on the shoulder and said: "It's disgraceful that a young man like you isn't in uniform!" To which he replied: "Madam, it may interest you to know that at eleven o'clock this morning I was having a dog-fight with a German pilot in a Me.109 over the French coast. I'm lucky to be able to say that this time I came off best. I may not be so lucky next time; but thanks a lot for having spoilt the first few hours off duty I have had for weeks." Whereupon she turned in swift retreat and slunk away. But the damage was done. When that young pilot, who incidentally wears the D.F.C. on his tunic, came to have a drink with me that evening, he was still boiling. In fact, he exploded. "Can't you do something to stop this monstrous kind of persecution . . .?" He wasn't thinking of himself. He was thinking of all the other people, women as well as men, who in this war are doing a front-line job, but don't happen to possess a uniform. I know I am much too busy myself, trying to do my job, rushing from one front to another, to have time to wonder whether someone else is doing their job. But there are lots of idle, vitriolic nosy-parkers who spend their time writing anonymous letters, and making remarks behind people's backs, which do no good at all and can do an infinity of harm.



M. D. P. 222222

14th Nov 1941

To Mr. Godfrey Wain, with best
wishes & pleasant journey; from
the Petty Officers here.

M. D. P. 222222
President.

E. G. Higgins.
E. J. Reynolds.
J. H. MacRae.
E. J. Higgins.
L. H. W. Wainwright.
W. G. Baker.
T. W. Wright.
T. K. Lewis.

J. P. Young.
J. P. Orchard.
B. F. Harpden.
J. L. L. L.
J. A. Young.
C. A. Mason.



Frances Day,
who has done more than any other
star to entertain the troops.

Rita Hayworth,
found her picture in the ward of
Sussex hospital and on it was
ribbied: 'To the boy in my
bed.'





The Commander-in-Chief with the eyes of the visionary;
General McNoughton.



The Private

We are here to find the best way to stick a dagger
to the Hun's belly," his Commander-in-Chief
said to me.



The Padre

John Young Fraser from Toronto.



Mr. Hadfield, their regimental
sergeant-major, fought in the
last war as a lad of sixteen.



Another generation : the Second Front is his only thought, to 'get cracking.'

31ST JANUARY, 1942

MY next story is of the King. The other day, when six hundred officers and men of the Canadian Forestry Corps were being inspected by His Majesty at Balmoral, the King noticed that the strap of one of the soldiers' gas-masks covered a decoration. Moving aside the strap, he saw it was a Distinguished Conduct Medal ribbon. "If I had that one," said the King, "I certainly would not keep it covered up." The soldier smiled, looking at the breast of his companion's tunic, which, of course, is absolutely covered with ribbons. I think that is a suitable entry for this Scrapbook, don't you? And I also liked a little anecdote about our Queen Mary, who, more than ever to-day, has a deep hold on everyone's heart. Now, Queen Mary has lately been helping in a West of England canteen. She wears an apron, just like all the other helpers, and many of the soldiers have been quite unaware that they had the honour of being served with a snack by her. Not long ago two Tommies entered the canteen and, advancing towards the counter, called out: "Hi, missus, two cups of tea, please." I love Queen Mary's comment about it afterwards. She said that she was delighted, because it was the first time in her life that she had ever been addressed as 'missus'!

And here is another story about clothes, quite a different story, but somehow I think you will understand why I have included it. The other day I was going on a tour of one of our biggest munition factories not far from Liverpool, where thousands of girls are working on vital war work—working as hard and eagerly as they know how. No matter how tired they may be they never slacken. They realize that every minute, every hour they spend at their benches will help to shorten our struggle, the struggle in which each one of us, every man, woman and child, must play our part. As I passed one bench I was struck by the charming brown snood that a pretty girl was wearing over the back of her hair. Very workmanlike and also very chic. Obviously it would do both for wearing inside the factory and as a kind of hat in the street. So I stopped and asked her where she had first seen the design. To my surprise she replied: "It is my own design." And then I discovered she had just finished a three years' course in dress designing when the war came, and would have set up in business had it not been for Hitler. "But I decided," she went on, "that the best thing I could do was to come and work in a factory instead. You see, Mr. Winn, the more of us who do that the sooner the war will be over and I can get back to my dress designing." And then she went on with the job, and I moved on to the next bench. Oh, I nearly forgot to tell you her name. It is Lily Kendall. I hope someone will show her this, as I should like her to know how much I admire not only her snood but her spirit.

14TH FEBRUARY, 1942

Dear England, remember my brother;
He was not very old.
You gave him his wings, and he gave you
A heart of true gold.

He used to play cricket, my brother,
(But you're sure to guess that);
Through a short busy hour of life's morning
He carried his bat.

He played with the big oval leather
As cleanly as ever man could;
He smiled if you asked him a favour,
As a gentleman should.

GODFREY WINN'S SCRAPBOOK

He would take second-best and be thankful,
Or run with the last and be glad ;
As trusting a soul as God fashioned,
Gave all he had.

He would play on your golden sea beaches,
Before they were iron-shod so ;
He used to run after the donkeys
A short while ago.

He camped by our clear Yorkshire rivers,
And steeple-chased over her moors ;
He belonged to a great northern county,
But now he is yours.

Dear God, will You lift him up gently ?
He was shy about You.
He brings You his dearly-won colours
Of red, white, and blue.

I THINK that is one of the most moving poems that has been born in this war. I shall never forget the afternoon when I heard it read, and read worthily, by the Padre whose services every Sunday afternoon at the Dome, Brighton, are packed. After I had attended one of these services I asked his permission to reprint this poem, and Mr. Simpson told me that the authoress was named Margaret Holroyd, that her brother, whom she had commemorated for all time, was called Ian, a Yorkshireman of twenty-five when war broke out, who volunteered at once to take the wings of the morning. The poem itself is called *Dear England, Remember My Brother*. And I should like to think that it will find a place in every anthology of war-time poetry. Moreover, if any parents reading this Scrapbook have children who have reached the stage in their education when they learn poetry off by heart, please give it them, so that the words will come back to them in years to come.

Meanwhile the dusk was falling as I left the Dome that afternoon, and drove back through the twilight, and my thoughts suddenly returned to another similar mood of solitude that I would like to tell you about now, because it will open up yet another vista. Come with me. We are standing in the dusk at the rails of the parent ship that looks after our submarines when they return from their dangerous under-sea patrols. We are there because a submarine is just about to leave the comfort and security of its home and go off once again into enemy waters, to hunt and be hunted. It is a moment that, once you have seen the parting, you never forget. There are no cheers, no flags waving as when a submarine returns with tales of triumph to relate in the wardroom. As she leaves her moorings and glides silently and secretly away into the dusk, some of the crew are lined up beside the conning-tower, already dressed in their sea-going clothes, wearing thick white jerseys which look almost grey beside the White Ensign fluttering aloft. With eyes raised towards the bridge of the mother-ship they salute their flag—our flag. And the officers and men round me on the deck, their comrades whose turn it may be to-morrow and to-morrow to take the same lonely pilgrim's way, silently salute back as in their hearts they wish their friends 'God Speed.' The submarine I watched go was the *Tigris*, which, under the command of Commander Bone, had already six grey chevrons on her conning-tower for successful attacks on enemy shipping. But it was so typical of naval tradition that, the afternoon I spent on board with the officers and men, all that the captain would say about his visit to Buckingham Palace to receive the D.S.O. was that his wife had to buy a new hat. But the day when he recently returned from a five-week patrol in Arctic waters, the *Tigris* and *Trident* were able to announce that between them they had succeeded in sinking eight large ships carrying troops and supplies to the German armies on the Russian front. Of these the *Tigris* accounted for five alone.

* * * * *

beautiful dream, and Olga held that the front-line fighters were dreamers, too—dreaming always of victory. And as she floated lightly as ever over the makeshift stage, tears came into the eyes of her audience, and at the end there was a wild scene of applause. Here is the final proof, if any were needed, that, even in the front line of war, beauty can still live.

28TH FEBRUARY, 1942

AND here is the name of someone I want you to remember, as the spring begins to burgeon, and once again you see the daffodils trumpeting their brief life across the grass, and the first buds on the trees, and the first lambs in the fields. Her name is BERYL SLEIGH, and she will never see these things with her eyes, only through her mind and her memory. And next time you are feeling tired or despondent with your lot, think of this girl who joined the A.T.S. as a driver at the beginning of the war. Alas, last spring, when she was on duty at Kensington, a bomb fell close to her and blinded her for life. At first she despaired. Everything seemed so hopeless. Then she talked with Sir Ian Fraser, the head of St. Dunstan's, and he encouraged her to resume her singing, that she had been working at hard before the war. A tutor from the Royal College of Music came to give her lessons at the St. Dunstan's Home at Church Stretton, where I met her on my first visit there last summer. I shall often recall the moment when I came into her room, and she stood up and somehow smiled to greet me. I thought then that her bravery was beyond words. Often I have thought of her since. And I think of her this day, refusing to be defeated, but determined to be independent, to take up singing as a career, and already she has sung many times, not only for her fellow inmates at St. Dunstan's, but also at some of the troop concerts in the neighbourhood. What a lesson is there for all of us, not only in the way in which she has turned defeat into victory, but also here is yet one more proof that the one law that never fails in life is the law of compensation. For her voice to-day is twice as beautiful as it was before the war.

10TH MARCH, 1942

THE scene has been duplicated in almost every town in which I have spoken in recent months for the Ministry of Information. You arrive, usually after dark. You are driven to the Town Hall. You are taken down a cold and lonely passage, and on the way you wonder what sort of audience is waiting for you and how the evening is going to turn out. And then you are coming into a warmer room, full of light and people—the Mayor's Parlour. The Mayor is waiting, with his chain of office round his shoulders, to greet you, and a little line of officials of the town are drawn up to be presented. Men and women who, since the war began, have been working hard for victory in their various ways, and now are going to sit on a row of chairs beside you on the platform. There are the same words of greeting, and I make the same answers. "No, I have not been to Loughborough before." "Yes, I am delighted to be here." "It is very kind of you to ask me, and I do hope that those who have turned out on such a cold night won't be disappointed." Then there is a few moments' pause before we file down the passage again, and on to the platform. But this time it was the same, and yet not the same. It was like the reel of a film which suddenly sticks. Because among the strangers being presented to me were two W.A.A.F. officers, young, pretty, smartly turned out in their attractive blue uniforms. I was just shaking hands with one of them when, instead of the usual conventional exchange of greetings, she said something which startled me and made me stop abruptly. She said: "I've always wanted to meet you, because you were such a great friend of Jackie's, too." "Jackie's?" I queried. And then something very strange happened. The film changed.

The film changed—and it was the summer of 1940 again and I was standing in the middle

of a small room, smaller than the Mayor's Parlour, a barely furnished hut, at the side of an airfield on the Kentish coast. There was a group of young pilots round me and it was midnight, and we were having a glass of beer before turning in. "We shan't trouble to get into pyjamas," they said in chorus. "We call our uniforms our sleeping suits these days." And they tossed coins as to whose hut I should share. In the end I had the other bed in Jackie's hut. The other bed, which the day before had been occupied by someone who would never sleep there again. And I lay awake, listening to Jackie trying to sleep. He'd get off for half an hour and then wake again in a nightmare, imagining that his machine was blazing and he was unable to bale out. After a time he did not try even to sleep; we started talking in whispers so as not to waken those in the other huts. We talked about something that might seem rather strange as a subject for a fighter pilot. We talked of music, the music he loved, Delius and Elgar, and he said: "The next time I get a spot of leave, let's go to a Prom. together and we'll take Ann (that isn't her name, by the way, but it will do); I want you to meet Ann so much." Well, I was meeting Ann now, at last, in the Mayor's Parlour at Loughborough. And there was nothing for us to say to each other because it was too late. Jackie was no longer there to introduce us. But something will stay in my mind always. And that is my memory of her courage. You would never have guessed, just to look at her, so upright in her uniform, her face smiling, her eyes so clear, that always a ghost walked at her side.

And now I want you to meet another woman who I think is doing a grand job, too, on the home front. Her name is Tessie O'Shea, and she is a famous comedienne. Tessie is an old friend of mine, whom I had not seen for over a year until the other night when I went into her dressing-room. I was feeling badly in need of a tonic myself, tired and sad because—oh, well, you know why we are all tired and sad sometimes these days. But Tessie made me snap out of it. Just as on the stage she pours her vitality and her good humour across the footlights and makes her audiences go away feeling a hundred per cent better, so for her friends, too, she has the same marvellous quality of making them forget, for a time, all their problems and worries and losses. When I thanked her for a lovely evening she stopped smiling for a moment and said very seriously: "You know, Godfrey, someone I care for terribly is far away serving his country, and often I feel like giving way to depression, too. And then I tell myself, 'I've got a war job to do,' and I make myself snap out of it. For I feel that as long as I can cheer up the folk by my broadcasts, my concerts for the troops and my nightly appearances in front of the footlights, I am doing my bit to win the war." Then she smiled again, that dazzling, brilliant smile of hers, and pushed up her blonde hair at the back of her head with a comical gesture, and with her last words, "Buck up, laad," ringing in my ears, I went home to bed, strangely comforted.

Now here's a story that concerns yet another woman playing her part in the war effort. She isn't famous like Tessie, but I hope you will treasure her story in this Scrapbook just as much. Her name is Edna Nunn and, like so many other girls, she got engaged to a boy in the Air Force. His name was Freddie Barnes, he was an air gunner, and one day when his fiancée was feeling a bit down at the prospect of yet another parting, he leant across the table at the café where they were having tea and said: "Now, if I'm ever reported missing I want you never to give up hope. You remember *Target for To-night*, and how 'F for Freddie' came back then? So shall I. Promise?" So Edna gave her promise, and then Freddie's leave was up, and they had to part like so many other couples, Freddie to return to his Bomber Station, Edna to her home in Broadwater Road, Tottenham. And they never met again. For not long after Freddie was reported missing. But Edna remembered her promise. She went on loyally working at her job as a typist in an office, she went on hoping, she went on believing. And now at last she has had her reward, for she has just heard that Freddie is a prisoner of war. "I shan't see him, of course, till the end of the war," she tells her friends. But she never forgets to add: 'F FOR FREDDIE WILL COME BACK.'

9TH MAY, 1942

I AM writing this very late at night, sitting up in bed, with my pad propped up on my knee. I've had a heavy day, seeing round a great shipyard, but I find it difficult to sleep because of the atmosphere of the bedroom whose guest I am. This room really belongs to the son of the house. It has been kept exactly as it was in his schooldays, and you feel that it is waiting for him to return for the 'hols,' that it will always be waiting for him. In the bookcase beside the bed are his favourite books. An edition of Sherlock Holmes, a copy of Lawrence of Arabia's Memoirs, and next door to them another book which has also come to be regarded as a classic—H. V. Morton's *In the Steps of the Master*. While over the mantelpiece opposite there is a watercolour of his white Seottie, with his head cocked as though he can hear his own master's step coming down the corridor, and beside it another picture, of a gallant frigate in full sail on a bright blue summer's sea, inscribed: *The Blenheim*. And not surprisingly, because for generations his family have been intimately connected with the building and launching of ships, the son and heir to this heritage had pinned up on the walls of the clothes cupboard the silhouettes of battleships, cruisers and destroyers, photographed out on peace-time manoeuvres, with the sun shining in splendour on their armoured decks. He had cut them out and stuck the pictures together in a pattern, rather like this Scrapbook. But there is one picture of a ship missing from that pattern to make it complete. And now before I turn out the light I feel I must try, however clumsily, to paint that picture for my Scrapbook.

When I arrived this morning at the shipyard, to speak to the workers, I was meeting my host, the head of a famous firm, for the first time. I liked him at once. He has that simplicity and gentleness of manner allied to strength which is the make-up of all men whose lives have been lived close to the heart of ships. Naturally the talk immediately turned to ships. "You have been out in the Atlantic in a corvette, haven't you?" he asked. "What was her name? I wonder if we built her?" "She was the *Arabis*," I replied, "and actually I think she was built by —. But we had another corvette with us in the convoy. Perhaps you launched her—the *Zinnia*? I always remember her name, because it's one of my favourite flowers. It's funny that such tough little ships as corvettes should be called after flowers. The *Zinnia*. I believe she went down on her very next voyage," something made me add. There was a pause, and then my companion said very quietly: "Yes, I know. My boy was in the *Zinnia*." Just that. I said nothing. There was nothing to say. It was left to the father to make me feel at peace again. We started on our tour, the programme that had been laid out for me.

Now to-night my mind is full of a blurred panorama of the huge yards; the different dry docks; the Polish seamen going to and from their ship, nearly ready for sea again; the American destroyer with her startling camouflage; my talk with Mr. Davidson, leading plater, who spoke of the ships on which he had worked with affection, as though they were his own children. And above all, the sea of caps, thousands of them, all universally black with paint and shipyard dirt, that I gazed down upon as I spoke from a girder that traversed the wall of one of the engineering shops. I spoke of my comrades in the corvette, of the men out there who sail across the Atlantic in the ships that the riveters, who wear those grimy old caps like a uniform, help to build. And as I tried to link up the pattern, the stillness of those Teesside men was my reward and will stay with me always. But something else will stay with me, too. Late in the afternoon we reached the waterside where the first of a new class of corvettes, named after rivers instead of flowers, was engaged upon trials. She was a grand-looking ship. Many feet longer than the *Zinnia* or the *Arabis*, with all sorts of improvements and new additions of strength and security for the crew. A source of pride and congratulation for every man in the yard, I thought, as I saw her put out into the river. Then we went into the carpenters' shop, with its cosy, sweet-wood smell. There, in a corner, I found a young apprentice putting the finishing touches to as fine a piece of teak as you could wish to

see, hammered to a ship's side for all the world to know her name. H.M.S. *Rother*. Still new and shiny; still unsalted by Atlantic spray and unried by enemy attack. H.M.S. *Rother*. Remember the name of the first of a new line of frigates now going into battle. Who knows what destiny lies ahead of yet another brave ship launched, maybe, with the help of your savings, to take the place of one that has been sacrificed in the common cause. And as I looked down and touched the smooth side of the wood a sense of reassurance enveloped me, and I thought what a lesson there is for all of us in the story that I chanced upon to-day—the story of the father who refuses to give way to his own sense of personal loss, but receives consolation in the knowledge that, thanks to his efforts and those of every man under him, the pattern itself is unbroken, the symbol of final victory is there for all to see, new ships, bigger ships, mightier ships—the symbol that is represented by that piece of teak in the corner of the carpenters' shop.

To-night, after dinner, they talked to me of their son, who had got himself transferred to a corvette because he wanted to serve in one of his father's ships, as though he had only gone on a long voyage and would one day return to his room with the blue wall-paper, in which I am writing. Once again I marvelled at their courage, and once again I remembered the old padre, who, on the Sunday after Dunkirk, preached from the pulpit of his little country church. His own son was one of the doomed defenders of Calais who fought on and on till all was silence. And knowing that, his flock waited anxiously for him to speak. They didn't wait in vain. This is what he said in his quiet, gentle voice: "*Why mourn those who are now the guests of the Lord?*"

23RD MAY, 1942

NOT long ago I had one of the great thrills of my life. I was invited to visit No. 10 Downing Street for the first time. As I approached the narrow street turning off Whitehall I saw a Canadian sergeant-pilot gazing wistfully towards that small, unobtrusive door set bang on to the pavement, which guards a million secrets. As though he could read my thoughts, the fair young Canadian exclaimed: "It doesn't look much from the outside, does it?" I agreed, for at first glance the home of our Prime Ministers seems hardly any different from your house or mine. "I wish I could take you in with me," I said to my companion, "but if you don't mind hanging about a bit I will tell you all about it when I come out." What about you yourself? Would you like to come for a personally conducted tour and stand right inside the Cabinet Room? All right, then. Take a deep breath. We're ringing the bell. Take another deep breath and we are inside the Cabinet Room itself with its fluted pillars at one end and its view out on to the walled garden where the Prime Minister takes his only exercise these days. As I gazed down at the long table, now empty, with its neat row of blotting pads and pens and inks, the atmosphere seemed to catch at my throat. Was it my imagination, or was the air very close, as though the room itself was stiflingly full of secrets? I looked towards the fireplace, but there was no fire burning. The next second, on the mantelpiece above, my eyes registered something that filled me with astonishment. A small vase, the only vase in the room, containing, what do you think?—*white heather*. Immediately, I could not help thinking of the contrast between the great political brains of the country that gather daily round that Council Table and that small vase filled with what has stood as a symbol of good luck down the centuries. So next time someone tries to laugh you out of some pet superstition, you can retort that if Members of the War Cabinet are not shy of having white heather near them when they are in session, why should we care! There is another object in the Cabinet Room which will always stay in my memory, too. Something which, oddly enough, photographed itself on my mind even more than the maps on the walls, the portrait of Robert Walpole, the simple plainness of the Victorian dark leather chairs. It was a pin-cushion. Yes, exactly the same sort of pin-cushion as you have in your own work-basket. But instead of employing the pins as you do, Mr. Churchill uses them for pinning

together the pages of important secret reports. So next time you get out your work-basket, pause for a moment and think of the Prime Minister, seated quite alone, reading reports, thinking, planning to-morrow's victories, and every few minutes reaching for another pin.

Do you know what Mr. Churchill likes to wear best when he is conducting a Cabinet meeting? Not a conventional suit of official black, but his siren-zipper-suit in Air Force blue, a one-piece garment which is his favourite, because it is warm and comfortable and cheerful-looking and, above all, easy to slip into after his rest in the afternoon. As he is called at seven each morning and often works till two or three the next morning, I am sure you won't grudge him his afternoon nap, when for an hour, between half-past two and half-past three, nothing is allowed to disturb him. And do you know what his favourite meal is? Cold meat and salad. And here is a little anecdote for this Scrapbook which I know you will love. One day Woolton Pie was being served at lunch, but when the Prime Minister's turn came to be helped, much to his secret delight, he found that he had been given a helping of roast beef instead. "Why have I got something different?" he demanded with a grin. The servant, who was just handing him vegetables, whispered in his ear: "That's a bit of our ration from the kitchen. We wanted you to have it." What about that for a real tribute!

All the State apartments at No. 10 Downing Street have been closed for the duration of the war. Even to-day in the room next to the Cabinet Room, where the Prime Minister's secretaries work, there is a jagged tear in one of the red curtains, the result of enemy action. So, like other British families, the Winston Churchills have adapted themselves to changed conditions and have turned the basement into a small dining-room and sitting-room for their own personal use. Not long ago there was great rejoicing, as for the first time they were able to have a real family reunion one evening, with their son Randolph home on leave from the East, and two of their daughters, Sarah, who is in the W.A.A.F., and Mary, the youngest, who had a few hours' leave from her depot. When the brief time was up, and the room was empty again, their beautiful mother, whom Mr. Churchill always refers to as "my beloved Glemmy," looked up at the wall and saw the photograph of her daughter in A.T.S. uniform, smiling blissfully. Mary loves her new life, and, knowing that, Mrs. Churchill, like so many other mothers facing similar war-time separations, is comforted. While as for Mr. Churchill, when sometimes his superhuman responsibilities must weigh heavily on his shoulders, he can look up at the wall, too, and gain reassurance from the frame next door to the picture of his daughter; a frame containing a letter sent by Mr. Roosevelt to Mr. Churchill by the hand of Wendell Willkie, and in it the President has quoted lines I want you to learn off by heart:

*Sail on, O Ship of State,
Sail on, O Union strong and great,
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the life of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate.*

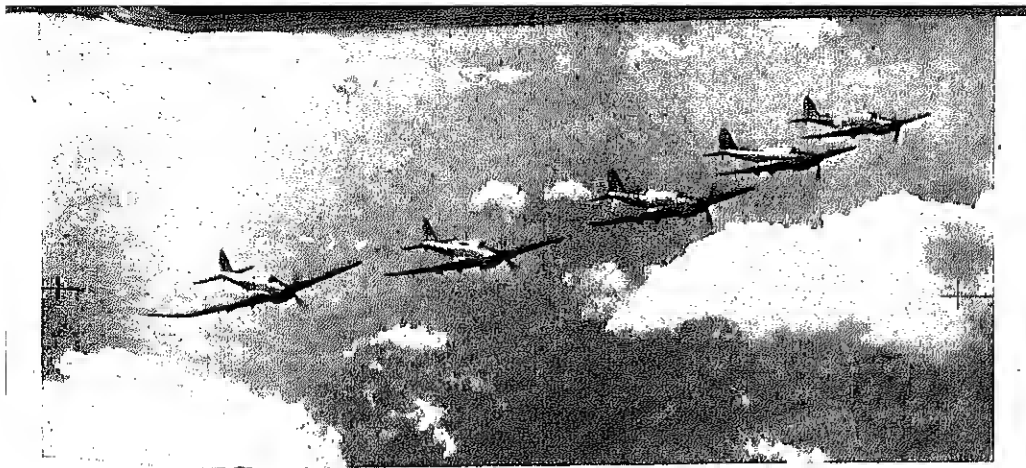
When I came out again into the spring sunshine I was still quoting those lines softly to myself, and suddenly I came face to face with the Canadian sergeant. I had been so engrossed I had forgotten him. But now I stopped and told him all what you have seen in your personally conducted tour, and something made me add: "Why did you volunteer to come over here to be a pilot?" He blushed and looked down at his boots. There was a pause and then he said shyly: "Well, you know, they were knocking the Old Lady about a bit." And I looked past him at the simple, inconspicuous façade of Number 10 and thought: How shyly we hide our treasures away; how shyly we conceal what is in our hearts. But perhaps that is the best way in the end.



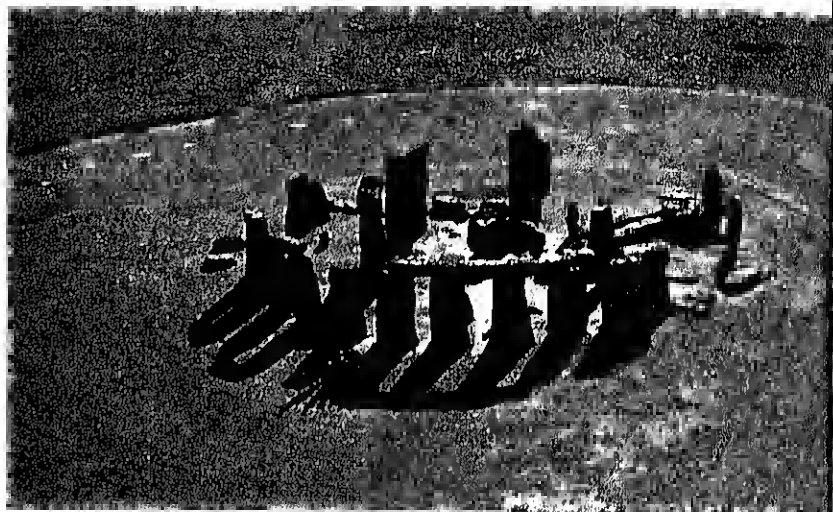
The Fife and Drum Band of the Canadian Highland Light Infantry on Church Parade.

Afterwards I have a lesson from
Pipe Major Corstorphine

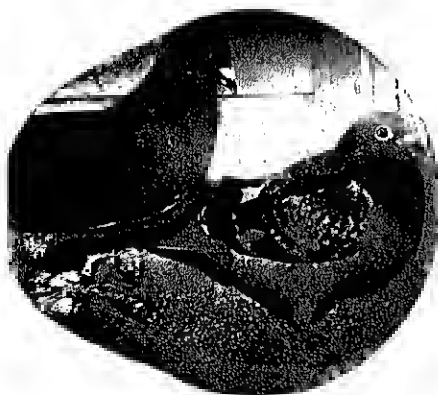




Stonehenge, taken by a Hungarian pilot serving in the R.A.F.

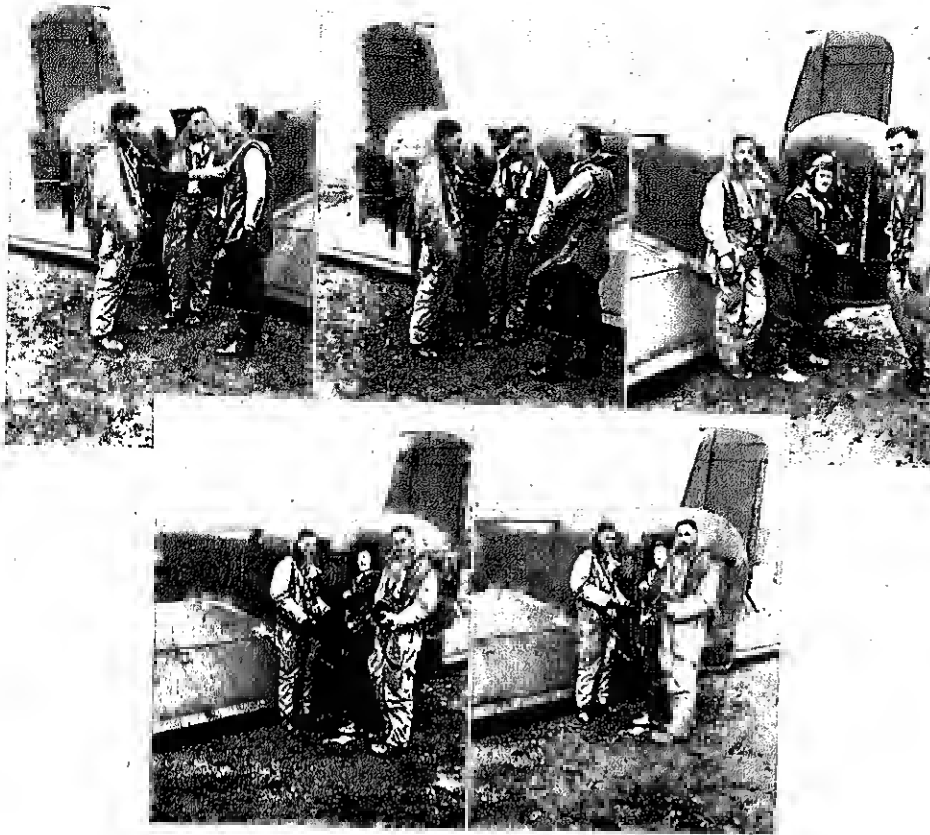


Our land under sun and shadow.



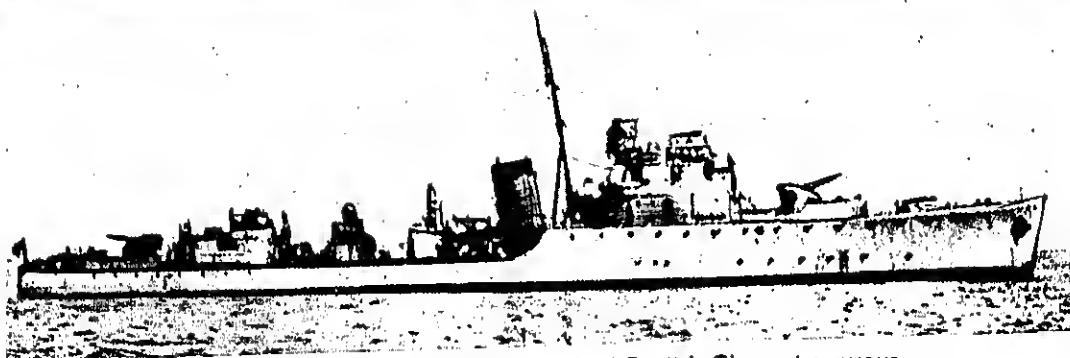
These carrier-pigeons brought the first news of the Dieppe raid.



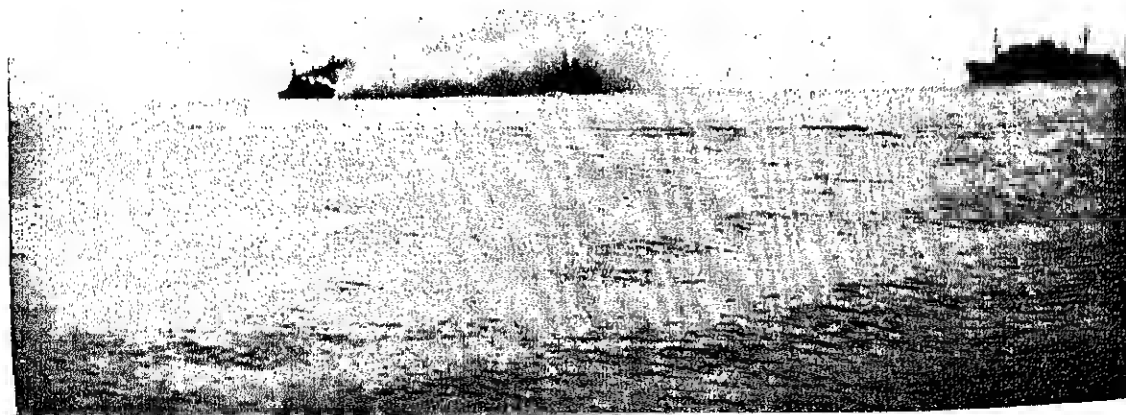


They call them Tail End Charlies—the rear-gunners of the R.A.F.

"If you cotton on to tracer
 And harmonize your gun.
 Systematically sky search
 Especially in the sun.
 If you're good at recognition
 Of aircraft friend or foe,
 Can estimate 400 yards
 And think you really know
 The sighting that's required,
 A long but steady burst.
 If you can do all that, my lad,
 Then Fritz will come down first."



H.M.S. Blencathra, the guardian of a hundred English Channel convoys.



Convoy to Russia

30TH MAY, 1942

A PICTURE of a film star. Have you ever cut out such a picture and stuck it in a frame and wondered secretly what it would be like to meet the original in the flesh? Don't be shy in admitting that you have. We all have. As a boy in the last war it was Mary Pickford who was my dream idol, and later, Lilian Gish. Now to-day it is a modern beauty who wears her hair in a long bob—Rita Hayworth, whom I loved in the new Astaire film, and whose picture I have just cut out for this Scrapbook. But this time there is more to it than sitting in a darkened theatre, and watching her smile at me from the screen. Much, much more. For I found her picture, printed as 'front-line news,' in a special kind of newspaper that has come to me all the way from Canada. 'The R.A.F. Rag' it is called, and it was the very first copy of the very first issue sent me by a friend who is helping to train our Air Force cadets out there. They asked Rita if she would mind being adopted as their Camp Star, and by return came a delighted telegram of acceptance, followed by her picture, and a letter that reads: '*Herewith is a photograph autographed to the gallant gentlemen of your continent. God bless them all and the best of luck.*' My friend tells me that the whole camp now is strewn with Rita's picture, from the senior Medical Officer's bedroom to the gun-turrets of the Ansons. I think she ought to feel as proud as you must feel yourself if someone close to you has sailed over the seas recently, perhaps to that same R.A.F. camp at Carberry, Manitoba, to finish his training.

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of spending their last evening with a thousand of these boys, just off the next day in a convoy from a secret port. And one of them, Frank Scott was his name, gave me a snapshot of himself, too. In my eyes it has just as important a place as a picture of Rita. And I am sure she would agree with me, for he will be one of the 'gallant gentlemen,' as she calls them, who in a few months' time will be a fully qualified pilot, ready and eager to join the ranks of those who won 'The Battle of Britain.' Frank is twenty-five, he comes from Leeds and he has a scarlet mop of hair, like Ginger, whom you know so well from previous Scrapbooks. Perhaps that's a good omen, and Frank will get the D.F.M., too, one day. Actually, he was in the Police Force till he volunteered, and I shall not forget the moment at the end of the farewell dance in the canteen when he stood to attention as the band played 'God Save the King.' "That's the best tune they've played to-night," he said aside to me. Mind you, that wasn't meant as a comment on the band. It was simply the expression of his faith, that hereafter, whatever his fortune, on sea or land or in the air, it would always be, for better or for worse, his country, his King. And I should like to think that some member of his family may chance upon his picture in this book and know that he went off into the unknown with the same smile, enjoying himself thoroughly his last night on this side of the ocean. Good luck, Frank—and all the other 'gallant gentlemen'—some of them so gallant that one is shy to try to put into words the sum of one's admiration. But I must try to do so, for the sake of those who may chance upon this Scrapbook in years to come.

And now I am thinking of another picture of Rita Hayworth in a large frame, standing on the invalid table across a bed in a hospital ward in a Sussex hospital. And on it is scrawled this time a different message. '*To the boy in my bed.*' A joke! And you try to smile, but it's a bit difficult at first, as your eyes go from the face in the frame—so smooth of skin—and then to the face of the boy lying back in bed, gazing at her beauty through a mist of bandages, that hide the scars of his burns when his machine caught fire and he was hurled through space. What a contrast, but it is not a bitter one because of the spirit of the men themselves. I can describe it best with a little story. There was one fellow lying there whose arms had been so scorched and twisted by the flames that he could not lift a hand to his mouth to smoke. So someone had given him a long holder and he managed with that. One afternoon, a friend of the hospital, going down the ward, saw that he wasn't smoking, and stopped by his bed.

"Where's your holder?" she asked. "Have you lost it in the sheets? Shall I look for it? Is it on the floor?" He said nothing to all her questions. It was only when she insisted on searching that, shyly, gruffly, he explained. "The bloke over there came in yesterday. He's burnt worse than me. So I gave him the holder. Sorry." What words can one find in answer?

They have found the answer themselves; with courage and patience and complete confidence they submit to the famous surgeon who is making history in this war by creating new faces, new limbs, new life for those who have been down into the shadow of the valley of death and for a long time were not able to lift their faces again to the sun, because there was no skin on their cheeks, no eyelids to their eyes. Sometimes the journey back takes a wearisome long time, and for many, many months the patient has to lie in his bed and look at the picture of the framed star in front of him. It may be Rita Hayworth, or it may be Brenda Marshall, or our own Vera Lynn or Frances Day or Elizabeth Allen, for they have all adopted a bed in this marvellous clinic, where all the resources of modern plastic surgery have been harnessed to the work of rehabilitation of men who never counted the cost themselves. And I shall never see any of those stars on the screen again without going back in memory to the day when I was privileged to watch the surgeon who performs these modern miracles at work in the operating theatre. And as I watched, fascinated, remembering how he had given up a huge private practice for the duration of the war to do this life-giving work, I remembered something else. Someone had asked him what was his ultimate ambition, and do you know what he answered? Not to be knighted for his great services to the country; not to go back to Harley Street one day and make another fortune. No, this was his answer: "I want to be a good craftsman." What a lesson there is for all of us in those seven simple words.

13TH JUNE, 1942

THIS is the 'Order of the Day' issued to each of the Norwegian merchant ships that recently ran the German gauntlet. I could not read it myself without a great sense of pride that such men should be our comrades.

To-day, at long last, we are going to England, determined, come what may, to render a staunch account of our voyage, as befits Norwegian seamen. Should we encounter misfortune at sea, remember that in our homes and among our countrymen it will be said with simple truth that we have done our best for the honour and freedom of Norway and Britain. But I for one have never held with this blockade and look once more to our success, believing that before many days have passed, your laughter will resound within a British seaport. So let us Merchant Seamen shape a westerly course in good heart, counting it an excellent privilege that we have been chosen by Providence to man these ships in the immortal cause of Freedom. God speed our ships upon this venture. Long live King George. Long live King Haakon.

20TH JUNE, 1942

A YEAR ago, this very week, I sailed in a destroyer, the *Blencathra*, guarding one of our convoys down the English Channel. A year ago, and for me it has gone like a week. So many adventures, so many new contacts, so much moving on. And still the convoys sail down the Channel, in sight of the French coast; still they are shelled, as we were, at midnight, by the long-range German guns. The captain never leaves the bridge from the moment of sailing till his ship is just coming into port again. Then, in the tradition of the Service, he goes down to his cabin and cleans himself up, so that he enters port looking as spick and span as if he had been on a June cruise in peace-time. And every week, as he brings yet another convoy safely into harbour, he glances once more at the framed quotation standing on

the desk of his cabin, which I, his guest, seeing for the first time, straightway copied down for my Scrapbook :

'WELL, YOUR DANGER IS AS YOU HAVE SEEN, AND TRULY I AM SORRY THAT IT IS SO GREAT. BUT I WOULD HAVE IT CAUSE NO DESPONDENCY, AS TRULY I THINK IT WILL NOT, AS WE ARE ENGLISHMEN.'

Here are brave words, written by Oliver Cromwell in 1642. Take courage from them, as they come to you across the centuries.

11TH JULY, 1942

MUSIC . . . the music that stirs your pulses and makes you proud of your heritage. The music that goes on echoing in your mind long after the last note has died away . . . like the sound of the fife and drum band of the Canadian Highland Light Infantry which a few weeks ago I watched lead the regiment on church parade down the front of a seaside town. It was their farewell parade, and the kiddies ran down the promenade beside the bronzed, magnificent companies of this famous regiment, trying to catch up and keep in step with the officers leading them, so smart in their glengarries and their trews of the Mac-Kenzic tartan ; and the band itself, led by Pipe Major Corstorphine—there's a good old Scottish name for you—and with Sergeant Mallard—'Duckie' to his mates—wielding the big drum. The sun is shining, the sea is blue, but if you closed your eyes for a moment you would imagine that you were amid the heather of a Scottish glen, with the sound of the bagpipes haunting your consciousness for ever after, so that in years to come, when Europe is free again and those kiddies are themselves grown men and women, they, too, will close their eyes sometimes and imagine that they can see the brave ranks marching forward in their Highland bonnets to greet with calm whatever destiny lies ahead of them.

I am very proud to have been the guest of their colonel for that last week-end before they moved off to new battle stations ; proud to have a collection of snapshots now for my Scrapbook ; proud to have been invited to attend their service, when their padre, John Young Fraser, from Toronto, gave out the first hymn, *Holy, Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Early in the morning, we rise to sing to Thee*. And a moment later, united and without faltering, their strong, confident voices took up the psalm of praise in a way which will continue to sing in my ears for long afterwards. Equally proud I was to be the guest at Sunday dinner of that figure of awe and majesty, the regimental sergeant-major. And what a good dinner I had in the sergeants' mess ; and what good conversation spread up and down the table. Mr. Hadfield, the R.S.M., had migrated to Canada after the last war, when he fought as a lad of sixteen in Flanders. Originally his family came from the Dukeries, and he himself was able to tell me that the gates of Welbeck Abbey were actually designed and forged by one of his ancestors. As I listened to him talking I wished you had been there ; because you would never have been shy again of inviting a Canadian boy into your home. And some of them are only boys, like Sergeant Houghton, who was only nineteen when he came overseas. I asked him why he had taken the plunge, and he replied at once : "Oh, I shouldn't have liked the others to come back to Galt after it was all over and found me still there." That is the spirit which has brought thousand upon thousand of Canadians to our shores. And still they come.

The scene changes, and we are sitting in a hall on the outskirts of Guildford on a recent Sunday afternoon. And on the platform a young man with a fine head and beautiful hands is playing a Chopin Nocturne so exquisitely that the stillness is absolute. We are all relaxed and released for a moment from the war. Felix Cassel was giving a concert on behalf of the many members of the Corps of Military Police who are now prisoners of war. And as the music took possession of me I remembered a letter I had recently read from a German prison camp

which I think has a message for us all, to make us more grateful than ever for our heritage, for the England that Shakespeare loved and glorified. 'Still, after twenty-one months, I feel as alive as the day I came in. Reading Shakespeare—"*Come unto these yellow sands; and then take hands*"—and hey presto! these drab surroundings have gone and I'm back on a Pembrokeshire beach on a summer night, listening to the splash of the waves; or live again that wonderful scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, the torches blazing in Capulet's hall, a confused murmur of voices . . . the sound of dancing and shuffling feet, and then everything in a state of suspended animation while Romeo and Juliet speak. You will probably think me slightly mad when you read this, but I'm trying to show you how I can still experience most intense enjoyment in a prison camp. . . . As for this war, it must be suffered and gone through with, for the spirit of liberty is everything in this life. . . .'

18TH JULY, 1942

COURAGE takes many forms. Before you dismiss that as a platitude, I want you to read this and then think about it for a few minutes. The other night I saw what I thought, myself, was a very brave act. A middle-aged woman, dressed in Salvation Army uniform, came into a crowded pub and proceeded to go from one group to another, quietly asking everyone in turn whether they would buy a copy of the *War Cry*. Many took no notice of her, but she persevered with the same sweet smile, and as I watched her I remembered that their *War Cry* isn't simply a jumble of words. Indeed, I wonder how many men and women in different Services have cause, at this moment, to thank the Salvation Army for an evening meal, followed by bed and breakfast in a spotlessly clean hostel, when they have been stranded in some strange town. That little, elderly woman in the worn uniform, quietly going from one person to another, always with the same courteous smile, selling copies of the *War Cry*, will often come back into my thoughts, to challenge me when I am being cowardly myself in shirking a moral issue.

Next, I want to pay a tribute in my Scrapbook to another couple whose daughter was a soldier, and who died at her post. She was only eighteen years old, and her name was Nora Caveney, and she was the first member of the A.T.S. to give her life for her country, helping to work the predictor on a gun site during an enemy raid. Less than a year ago she was a spinner in a Lancashire mill; then she joined one of the first mixed batteries to take over front-line guns on the South Coast. Nora was following an enemy plane, and was 'on target,' when she collapsed, hit by splinters from a bomb. Quite rightly, they gave Nora a military funeral with full honours, and afterwards Mr. and Mrs. Caveney had the magnificent courage to remark simply: "*We are glad that we went down there. We have seen the grand work that Nora and girls like her were doing, and we have seen something of the great comradeship between the girls who are doing really front-line work on the guns. We know that Nora was killed at the moment when she was doing something that was helping in our fight.*"

Finally, I have chosen yet another salute to courage. The salute that General MacArthur gave to the mothers and wives of the men who defended Bataan to the last. It needs no comment.

"The Bataan Force went out as it would have wished, fighting to the end its flickering forlorn hope. No Army has ever done so much with so little, and nothing became it more than its last hour of trial and agony. To the weeping mothers of its dead I can only say that the sacrifice and halo of Jesus of Nazareth has descended upon their sons and that God will take them unto Himself."

25TH JULY, 1942

STRANGER than fiction—you know that familiar phrase, just as you probably know the stories and romances of the well-known novelist, Barbara Cartland. But now she has produced a book that is very different—not fiction this, but fact; no lovers' romance, and yet the book is so full of love, and possesses such a romantic quality, that though it ends in tragedy you are left with no sense of sadness, because of the epic quality of the story unfurled. The story of her brother, whose name is the title of the book, *Ronald Cartland*—a young man who was brought up in the same county of Worcestershire as I was, on the edge of the Malvern Hills. Every spring he beheld the beauty of the blossom spreading like pink foam over the Avon Valley, and years later, again as I did, he saw the want and devastation of other valleys that were not so green, in the distressed areas, and he swore that if he got into Parliament he would fight for better conditions for those who could not fight for themselves. He kept his promise, and his name will be long remembered in the House of Commons as someone who always spoke the truth irrespective of party favours. And now the story, right from his touchingly happy childhood to the last letter he wrote from France to the mother he adored, as I adore mine, is told by his sister with such simplicity and such self-effacing modesty that I hope it will become a classic that will be read by every family in the country. For, after all, it is for the preservation of that perfect family life we are now ready to make such sacrifices. Already it is written in that other Book, that neither Ronald Cartland nor his brother Tony came back from Dunkirk.

1ST AUGUST, 1942

THREE four-leafed clovers lie upon my desk. And beside them is a letter headed 27, Tregenna Avenue, Harrow, which reads:

'Will you please give the enclosed to Tommy, Tiny and Shorty, if you think they would like to have them. They are from our own little lawn. My husband is in the R.A.F. radio section. I sent a clover to him before he left for overseas. Like Tiny, my husband is not superstitious, but he has promised to "bring it back," so perhaps they are not so hard-boiled as they pretend. With compliments from Mrs. Alice R. Southwell.'

I like that letter. I like it a lot. It makes the writer come to life, as though she were in the room. But I expect you are wondering what it is all about. Well, let me introduce you to Tommy, Tiny and Shorty. By the time this appears this newly teamed-up crew of a Blenheim bomber will be somewhere in the Middle East. I met them during their last week in England, and flew with them on their last practice bombing raid, before they went on to Operations. Somewhere in this book are the snapshots that were taken that day, of Shorty, the air-gunner, who came all the way from Sydney in Australia, and Tommy, the observer, and Tiny.

Here is another letter that I shall always keep. Her husband was a member of a Blenheim crew, too, and this is her story: 'Last summer a squadron of Blenheims went on a daylight raid on enemy shipping, and one was shot down in the sea and, though the pilot made a good landing only a short distance from the enemy coast, nothing had been heard of them since. Her husband was the navigator on this plane. A bank clerk up to the outbreak of war, and interested in wireless, he at once volunteered for air-crew duties, as he was told they were short of observers.' She continues: 'As you are so interested in human nature, you'll perhaps like to know that on the same trip there was an air-gunner friend of his whom he had once brought home with him. At once he wrote to his mother and asked her to write to me, and the result was an invitation to come up here to see her—a perfect stranger. I did this after a time, and am now living with my child at the home of my husband's air-gunner, where I was welcomed with open arms. I lived for nearly two years in a blitzed area, but after my husband was reported missing I felt

there was nothing to stay there for. You see, his station was very near and he used to fly out on Operations over my bungalow—it was a standing joke with the crew about my washing on the line !

And here is yet another letter from someone whose name is Minnie Clark :

'A few weeks ago I read about your visiting a hospital for airmen. You spoke of the miracles that are being performed on those wonderful boys. My young man was a Flight Sergeant-Observer. He was killed exactly a year ago. I am so very proud of him, he was so brave and ambitious like all those boys in hospital. It was Bob's birthday the other day. As he lies buried in Egypt, I am unable to place the flowers he loved on his grave. I want the ten shillings that I should have spent to go to help that hospital. That way it will be helping some young man to return to his loved one. I know that Bob would have it that way, so please help me for his sake. I will send another note next year. . . .'

It is my own mother's favourite expression : *Flowers for the Living.*

5 TH. SEPTEMBER, 1942

IT was like going into a world of the future, where all traffic, to avoid congestion, passes beneath the street. There in the great underground vault, were row upon row of black, shiny cars, waiting for the signal of the sirens to go out and do their jobs as rescue squads. There was no blitz that night, nor for many nights before, in London, but the waiting and the watching must go on, just the same. Sometimes I think the Civil Defence personnel of our cities have the hardest task of all, keeping up a constant pitch of efficiency and zeal, whether the alert sounds or not. And I was only too delighted when I was given the opportunity, not long ago, to pay back my debt of gratitude as a London citizen by being one of the member of a special 'Brains Trust' invited to 'entertain' the members of the Westminster Civil Defence Service, off-duty. The other members of the 'Trust' who also ventured down into the depths of that underground centre that night were as shy as I was that we should soon all be out of our depth, in another kind of way ! They were that familiar, friendly figure, Freddy Grisewood, who presided as efficiently as question-master as he does over the air on the Kitchen Front ; Margaret Irwen, my favourite woman novelist, who, among other things, was asked whether she considered it legitimate for a writer to juggle with historical accuracy when creating a romance, say, about Mary, Queen of Scots, and replied as emphatically : "No," as when she was asked, did she think genius was 'something' born in you, she answered : "Yes" ; Mrs. Knox, the Controller of the A.T.S., of whom I shall have much more to say in a moment ; and William Armstrong, who until the war ran the Liverpool Repertory Company, and is now doing a fine job at Drury Lane in connection with E.N.S.A. When he held out his hand to me, smiling, I was no longer in the world of the future, I was back in the world of the past—seventeen years back, a raw youth playing very juvenile leads at the Liverpool Playhouse, and dreaming the dreams that all young people do dream of fame, one day. . . .

And here was William, my mentor in those days, looking as though Time had stood still for him. How many famous stars of to-day he has discovered and fathered ! Robert Donat, Hugh Williams, whose place I took at Liverpool, Cecil Parker, Herbert Lomas, Michael Redgrave and Diana Wynyard. "I shouldn't mind having an agent's fee of ten per cent on all your salaries to-day," he remarked, just before we filed on the platform. And I thought, you paid me three pounds a week and I was the proudest actor in the land. I wonder what has happened to the two dear old sisters who fed and housed and mothered me, and mended my socks and washed my shirts, and stopped me being homesick. How many people who are successful to-day have cause to remember with deep and tender gratitude a landlady in a strange city who was kind to them in their early youth ? There was always a nice supper waiting for me to come home to after the show, and I used to walk back from the theatre, and

sometimes lingered, looking down at the solitary, dark silhouette of the cathedral; and sometimes, too, I was very lonely and impatient, and the echo of my footsteps seemed to cry out to me: Hurry, hurry, or you will miss the boat. Well, I am still hurrying, still lonely sometimes, still impatient. Aren't we all, I decided, as we hurried after William down that dark underground passage, and yet another unknown door opened, another test and experience was before me. I've forgotten everything I ever learnt at school. I hope I'm not asked anything too difficult, I thought in a sudden panic, as I blinked in the lights, and saw the row of faces before me.

Yes, but isn't life the best school—especially in war-time? Look at Mrs. Knox, who sat next to me on the platform, and shared many questions with me, such as: "Do you think that men and women in uniform are attracted towards each other because of their uniform, or for the 'usual reasons'?" That brought a roar of laughter from the audience, but Mrs. Knox, quite rightly, took the question very seriously, and I think you will be interested in her answer. She thought that uniform made about thirty-five per cent difference. That is to say, in every hundred war-time romances, thirty-five are started off in the first place by the affinity of both people being in uniform. To quote Mrs. Knox: "That means many subjects in common, instinctive sympathy in regard to shared disciplinary experiences, problems of messing, leave, keeping one's equipment and uniform clean, coping with superior officers, etc." Mrs. Knox ended up this answer by saying that she hoped that after the war, when women come out of uniform again, the comradeship of the war, engendered by the common wearing of khaki, will be preserved in the future relationship of the sexes. I echoed that with all my heart. Meanwhile, long before the evening was over I was Mrs. Knox's devoted slave. Nor am I in the least shy of confessing that, because I know every other man and woman in the room felt the same. To begin with, she wore her uniform like a soldier, and yet still looked like a woman. She told me later that she always washed her own hair, because privates in the A.T.S. had to do so when they were working in remote camps—she wears hers almost as short as a boy's at the back, with more feminine wings over the ears—and always cleaned and polished her own shoes. I was so impressed by the glitter of her shoes compared to my own that I asked her recipe. Here it is: She cleans her brown shoes with saddle-soap, put on with a damp cloth. This is rubbed dry with a dry duster, and polished with Proper's or Kiwi polish. Finally she wipes them over with a touch of methylated-spirit. This, she assured me, should last a fortnight.

One last memory of the Brains Trust. I had been asked about planning after the war, the rebuilding of our houses that have been blitzed, the rebuilding of our world that has been shattered, and Mrs. Knox broke in to say: "But it's no use putting it on to the shoulders of the Government, that the Government must do this or that, or else the workers will revolt. It is we women who are the Government. At least, we should be. It is our responsibility and our privilege to help plan the new world; ourselves, each one of us, whether in uniform now or not; afterwards, when we are all alike in mufti again, then we must unite more than ever as a sex, to pull our weight, not in party politics but in community life." I agree with every word of that. It's up to you.

19TH SEPTEMBER, 1942

SOON the leaves will be falling from the beech trees again, and before the woods and forest glades are bare of foliage once more, I want to bring to life for you in this Scrapbook a memory of mine—a very special memory of one day when summer was still at high noon, and I visited for the first time the secret headquarters of Bomber Command. It was just after the first great a-thousand-bombers-a-time raids had taken place on Cologne and the Ruhr, and it was so strange to arrive (piloted by a charming Waaf, who asked permission to drive in her shirt-sleeves because of the heat) at the cool heart of the forest, with nothing in sight but a cathedral arch of trees, canopy after canopy stretching away into the distance, no

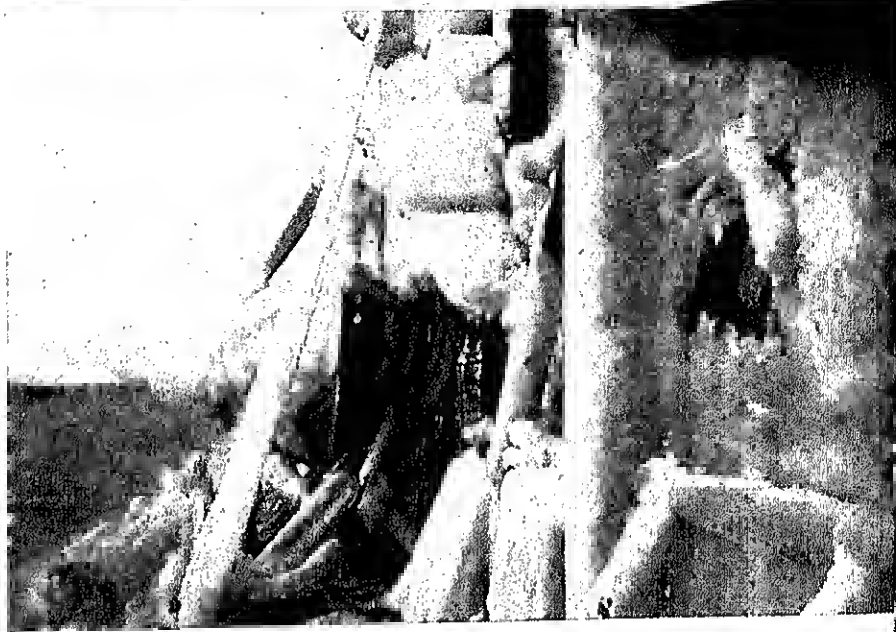
constant roar of aeroplanes, as at every Operational Station, and yet he told that this country house was the very heart of Operations itself. So strange because of the contrast between this absolutely peaceful, typically English country scene, the sort of setting that is the dream of a tired business man who longs to retire one day, and the tireless activity, the tremendous plans, the vital decisions taking place within those innocent, ordinary-looking walls, with consequent ever-increasing weight of bombs being dropped all the time now upon the very heart of Germany's big industrial centres. It is such contrasts as these that in years to come will remain my most vivid memories of all in regard to these momentous times in which we are all playing our respective parts.

Now I have had the privilege during the last three years of being received by many commanders-in-chief: Lord Louis Mountbatten, head of Combined Ops.; General McNaughton, leader of the Canadians over here; Admiral Sir Percy Noble, who directed from his H.Q. at Liverpool, the Battle of the Atlantic, ever fierce and fluctuating (he has since gone to Washington); and now the Commander-in-Chief of Bomber Command, Air Marshal Harris, who is 'Bert' to all his friends, though that is not his Christian name. And you know, after my hour's talk alone with him I almost felt like calling him 'Bert' myself. I mean, he was so friendly, so simple, so unaffected. I find that everywhere I go the really big people are always the same. They never put on an act, like some folk, to try to impress you how busy they are, or how important. Three different times I suggested to the Air Marshal that he must want to get on with his work, but though there was another big raid coming off that night he showed me quite clearly that he wanted me to stay. From the moment when I came into his room, so bare of furniture except for the desk at one end and the single arm-chair beside it, and he said: "Now what can I do for you?" until the moment when we said good-bye, and his last words were: "Come down again and see us any time," I felt absolutely at home. And I put this on record because I sincerely believe that complete simplicity in our Allied leaders is going to play a great part in our final victory. Compare them with the antics and tantrums and mock-royal show of Goebbels and Goering and Hitler himself. Nothing but limelight and publicity and fake theatrical effects. It is not that which wins wars; it is not that which inspires the people. As I am inspired every time that I come away from one of these interviews with our leaders. And do you know what impressed me almost most of all about Air Marshal Harris? I asked him if he stays up all night when there is a big raid on, and he replied: "Not at all; I go to bed and sleep." You see, he can afford to do that now. He knows that everything, down to the last detail, that can be done to make the raid a success has been laid on, and there is nothing more that he can do except await the outcome with complete confidence. As you must, too. Because the Commander-in-Chief has no doubts about the final outcome. Victory, and victory not so far away either. Now that the Germans are at last getting their own medicine back in double and treble doses, he believes that as in the last war the civilian population will crack. All bullies are cowards at heart, he reminded me. I think that is a fundamental truth, to which it is important to hang on this coming winter, when the beech trees are bare again, and you lie awake at night, wondering if there will be a raid, and whether our own bombers are over, and how those dear to you are faring. And I want to quote something now that was published all over the world at the time of my interview, but it is so important that I do not think it can be repeated too often. What follows is an exact transcript of a section of my war diary written the same evening after my visit to Bomber Command Headquarters.

"And our losses, sir?" I asked. "I've heard people sometimes doubt the official figures, comparing them with the fantastic ones put out by the Germans, wondering whether the real truth does not lie somewhere in between. Are we always absolutely honest?" I suppose in a way it was an impertinent question but somehow I felt that in this room, so realistically furnished, taking their lead from him at his daily conference, everyone always got down to brass tacks. Anyway, he did not seem to mind. Instead, he answered at once: "It may interest you to know that in actual fact we gave out too many losses in the first giant Cologne raid, because in the general scramble afterwards in checking up, one plane that had got back late was missed out of the count."



Summer In the Med.
The oil tanker *Ohio* battles through
to Malta.



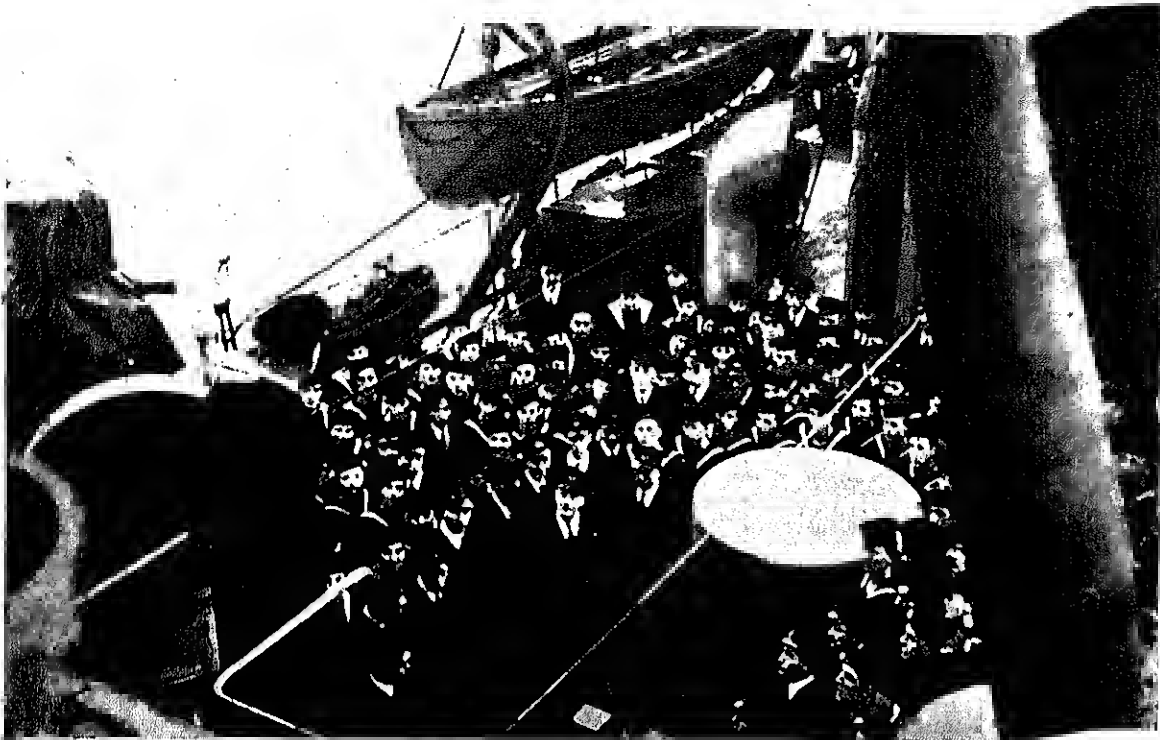
Winter In the Barentz Sea en route
to Russia.



Spring In England.

Tessie O'Shea
Her broadcasts used to reach
us even in Russian waters, and
remind us of the 'Bright Lights'
waiting . . .





"From now on," their Captain said, "you must expect continuous attacks."



End of the Voyage
Two merchantmen survivors live to fight another day.



Start of the Voyage
"Are you coming with us to Russia as our mascot?"



Commander Bone, D.S.O., D.S.C.,
R.N., captain of H.M. Submarine
Tigris



'Tom'



'Ginger'



'Les'



The Yeoman

They were my mates on an historic
voyage to Russia



'Percy'

Finally, have you ever stopped to wonder how many men and women it takes to get a great bomber, like a Stirling or a Halifax or a Lancaster, off the ground? *Between forty and fifty.* These are official figures, and it makes you think, doesn't it? It makes you think of all the unknown heroines and heroes in the ranks who are so seldom noticed by the outside world—the telephonists and filing clerks, the riggers and the armourers, the flare-path boys, and the orderlies who brew the coffee for the crews before they set out, and there are dozens of others, who wear no wings upon their tunics, but their Commander-in-Chief thinks they do not get enough praise, and surely *he* ought to know. In particular, Air Marshal Harris pointed out how there are W.A.A.F. officers and W.A.A.F. secretaries and W.A.A.F. telephonists, entering day after day that holy of holies, the Ops Room, beneath his study, right down in the bowels of the earth. I was allowed to peep myself and the first thing I saw was a Waaf on duty, working side by side with the men, chosen for her super-intelligence, hearing all the secret 'gen' and deliberately obliterating it again from her mind the moment that she leaves the Ops Room and goes down the long underground passages, mounts the cold stone staircase, and finally emerges into the world outside, world of beech trees and acorns and squirrels garnering their winter store. As I said at the beginning, what a contrast!

26TH SEPTEMBER, 1942

WHAT did you do, Mummy, in the Nazi war?" You remember the famous poster in the last war of the child asking his Daddy the same question. It suddenly occurred to me not long ago that a new version of this poster would be very topical to-day. I was flying across England in a bomber, and my pilot was a woman. Yes, a woman. It does sound rather startling, doesn't it? Nevertheless, it's true. I was spending a few days as the guest of the A.T.A. (the Air Transport Auxiliary), which is doing a magnificent job ferrying planes from the factories to the Operational Stations, where they are needed to refill gaps. There are nearly seven hundred men pilots in this service, and eighty women, who wear the same dark blue uniform as the men, and do exactly the same job. They shirk nothing, and many of them are mothers, like my pilot on this occasion, Mrs. Patterson. You should have seen her handling a heavy Wellington bomber with the same ease as my mother rundles a wheelbarrow. Well, you know how proud I am of my mother, and I bet Mrs. Patterson's son is just as proud of his. And do you know, we flew right over his school, because that happened to lie directly on our route, and as we came down low enough to see the horse-mower on the cricket field his mother shouted above the roar of the engines: "He's in bed with German measles. He'll hear the machine and guess it's me!" I guess Master Patterson, aged ten, must be a very happy boy, with his father a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm, and his mother a First Officer with wings on her tunic, too.

At lunch that day at one of the busiest Ferry Pilots' ports of call we talked of another First Officer of the A.T.A., who would never enter that Half-way House again; of someone who had made her last journey, but whose memory still lingers on, and always will, for she blazed a trail. I write, of course, of Amy Johnson. It moved me very much to hear the warm note of appreciation that came into my companion's voice when she spoke of her comrade, who was one of the first women to enrol under the banner of Pauline Gower. Mrs. 'Pat' said: "It mustn't have been easy for Amy, at first, to submit herself to all the discipline and the flying tests and be just one of the crowd. Some of the crowd used to rag her, too, and try to take a rise out of her. That's the penalty of being famous, I suppose. But Amy took it all in good part. She just got on with the job, and the tragedy of her loss was that she was obsessed with the feeling that because of her record-breaking flights she ought always to be prepared to fly in any kind of weather, and take greater risks than anyone else. She wouldn't admit that the weather can defeat any pilot sometimes." Poor Amy, I thought, and as I listened it suddenly came to me that perhaps the finest part of her record of all was that at

the end, she was prepared to go back to the beginning and be anonymous again, one of a host of pilots, where always before all the limelight had been on her alone. And I was so glad to hear, too, from Mrs. Patterson that her memory is to be perpetuated by an Amy Johnson scholarship, that will help some other eager flying student to blaze further trails one day to the honour of her sex and her country.

3RD OCTOBER, 1942

YOU have been invited to a ship's dance. Coming? I should say you are. Tickets are two shillings each, lady friends free. It's being held on shore, a kind of farewell party, before another sort of 'party' that's going to take the ship's company far away from 'Ma, I miss your apple pie.' That's the tune they were playing when I arrived with the Captain and his 'lady' and a Commander, a friend of our Captain, who had been dining with us, and who had already been sunk twice in the Atlantic. But all that seems far away to-night, as the Gunner, Master of Ceremonies, comes forward to greet us, and I ask the Captain's wife to dance, and the Captain asks one of the W.R.N.S., who is sitting along the wall. They have taken off their jackets because of the heat, but they still look neat and smart in their white blouses. Round and round we go—now it's an Excuse-me Waltz, and my partner at the end, a W.A.A.F., decides that it's time to quench our thirst. In the bar we find a friend of mine, Tom, a Petty Officer off the ship, ladling out beer from a barrel. Tom is grinning at us over all the heads between. That afternoon he and I and Sandy, the Gunner's Mate, and Ginger, the Captain's coxwain, all went bathing ashore. And the fuss they made about going into the pool; you'd have thought they'd never been in cold water before! "The last bathe I had was in November in the Atlantic," said Tom. "Well, that must have been colder," I suggested. "It was," he agreed, as he rubbed himself down, and suddenly a shadow crossed his face, and the sunlight went from the pool's surface, and I could not see the laughing holiday crowd, I could only visualize what might happen to us, for I was to be their guest, not only at the dance that night, but on the long voyage ahead. But now at the dance Tom is smiling again, especially when one of his customers turns out to be the Commander, the Captain's guest, who was actually the commander of the ship in which Tom was serving when he had his 'bathe' in the Atlantic. And they hadn't met since. Just another of those extraordinary coincidences that the war is always throwing up.

'Roll out the barrel, let's have a barrel of fun.' As though to remind us that to-night our minds must be free of anything but happy memories, the band strikes up again insistently. But there is something in my pocket that I can't forget. The account of that November night in the Atlantic, written by the Commander, when the survivors reached port again. He lent it to me at dinner, before the dance. He said modestly: "Of course, a writer like you won't think much of my amateur efforts." Well, I wonder what you will think. Here are some extracts: 'I took up the megaphone and spoke to the ship's company, told them that the ship had been hit by a torpedo, but there was no need to abandon ship yet. Illustrating the spirit of the ship's company they responded by clapping. On every patrol I had been in the habit of giving the crew a lecture on the war in general, always at the end of my lecture they used to give me a clap, and I was rather surprised when I gave them this bald announcement, they again responded by clapping. . . . We walked about the boat deck, had some rum, just enough to keep us warm, laid down together and covered ourselves with blankets and we were really very comfortable. We took it in turns to keep watch for the submarine coming back, but it was just a question of waiting until it was time for the ship to sink and ourselves to get off. "Come on, over the side." "Push away from the ship, don't get caught by the suction"—we swam away, and when we were about twenty yards off we could feel all kinds of disturbance going on in our rear, and could feel the suction and the ripples of the ship going down, and a terrific noise as all the girders twisted and bent, and the drums rolled about and

crunched together. I looked over my shoulder. She was half-way down. She rolled over on her starboard side and slid into the water. . . . We did not try to swim much as there was no point in it. At one moment we started a song, but came to the conclusion that we'd better reserve our energy, but we wisecracked the whole time, and joked each other and jollied about.' That was 4.30 a.m. No daylight until 8.30 a.m. But the majority of them survived the ordeal—"my bathe in the Atlantic," as Sussex-born Tom called it—and were picked up by a destroyer. Space in this Scrapbook does not permit the telling of the whole story, but this is the last sentence with which that Commander, who must remain anonymous, ended up his report: 'Looking back on the night's proceedings, I can't help remembering how much strength I gained from the conduct of the men I had with me. Time after time they came to me and said: "You know, sir, we wouldn't have missed this for anything." I am also grateful to the Senior Wireless Officer, who stuck to his wireless room until everything had gone dead.'

Looking back on the dance, I can't help remembering how much strength I gained from the conduct of the men of this ship's company. I can't help remembering how one after another they came up to me, and said: "You can always have my rum ration if things are a bit tough on this trip." And, then, before I could thank them for the gesture, they added: "My missus would like to shake your hand." Or: "My young lady would love to have a dance with you." Or they just came up and shook my hand themselves and said: "Well, here's good hunting," like the stoker, towering above his mates, all dressed up in his No. 1s, who assured me that everything was going to be O.K., because he'd got a piece of coal from his native Glasgow as a mascot. And, finally, I can't help remembering the moment towards the end when the band struck up 'For he's a jolly good fellow,' and the whole company, men and women alike, gathered round the Captain and his gallant lady—for she had deliberately put on a blue dress, instead of black, though her only son of twenty-one was killed a few weeks before—and a gangway was made and they went down the hall between two ranks of cheers, and I am not ashamed to say that for a moment my own eyes were clouded with happy tears. Happy because I was going with them, not only as the Captain's personal guest, but as a friend of all the three hundred men on board. A great honour and a great adventure.

17TH OCTOBER, 1942

I AM writing this at sea. There's a chance that mails may be put ashore at a far-distant port. What always strikes me afresh every time I go to sea is the extraordinary snugness of life on board. No house-wife ever kept her home tidier or cleaner than my shipmates keep their various messes. This afternoon I visited the Petty Officers' mess in the dog watches. There are two long tables down the centre of the mess. When the tea-things have been cleared away, a red baize cloth is put on that looks cheerful and homely. Sandy, the Gunner's Mate, the King of the Lower Deck, is looking at—what do you think? A catalogue of stamps! That is his favourite pastime on leave; attending stamp auctions and adding to his already first-class collection. Near him, a fellow, still in his boiler suit, is wielding an electric iron with professional skill. He is ironing out his 'smalls,' and then carefully folding them and putting them away in his locker. Four other P.O.s, including the huge, apple-cheeked 'Florrie'—can you guess what his surname is?—are intent over a game of 'Uckers' (that's Ludo to us ashore). Mac, the Scot who, like all those that I have met who come from north of the Tweed, has a very warm heart under a shy façade, is sitting in one of the basket chairs at the other end of the mess, reading a three-year-old copy of *The Geographical Magazine*. Another boy is going through his snapshots, taken on leave, for the hundredth time. His wife would be happy if she could see him, I think. On the wireless they have just played *The Holy City*, and everyone took up the refrain, 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem,' and now the loud-speaker—there is one to every mess, so that music goes right through the ship—is giving a performance of Dick Addinself's

The Warsaw Concerto. The best piece of music ever written, volunteered the Yeoman, who, from repeating signals to the Captain on the bridge in the teeth of many a gale, has developed a voice that is a rival to his namesake, Quentin Reynolds.

Another snug corner of the ship is the canteen, tucked away just beneath the galley, where all the cooking for the mess-deck is done. I am never tired of paying visits there, not only for what I can buy—razor blades, clear gums, chocolate, matches, soap—but for watching the procession of customers pass the open hatch. The canteen manager, Tom Brooks, who comes from Darwen in Lancashire, where I spoke on a very wet, stormy night last winter, lets me have a privileged seat behind the counter, and I am reminded irresistibly of a village store that stocks everything, except that in this case there's no gossiping—perhaps because all the customers are men! They queue up every morning at their 'stand-easy' time. They can buy twenty cigarettes a day at the special naval rate of twenty for sixpence, but I notice that just as many seem to prefer their daily ration of a bar of chocolate. Very comforting when you are on the middle watch between midnight and four in the morning. Some of the customers are veterans of the last war; some are making their first voyage to sea. They are all treated alike at the canteen hatch. First come, first served. Cash accounts only! They are like small boys grasping a penny in a grubby fist for sweets. Small boys . . . in the break between lessons . . . but if and when action comes, then, one and all, they will assume a very different stature.

It's snug, too, up in the Captain's cabin, just under the bridge. So far I haven't missed a meal. A record for me! I give part credit for this to Mulley, the Captain's steward, who looks after me like a wet nurse and always seems to know exactly what I can manage. He is just the same at sea as he is in port, when the Captain is having a lunch-party. He allows nothing to break his routine or rhythm, and he hasn't allowed a single dish to crash to the floor. I rag him and tell him he can always earn his living as a juggler after the war. But Mulley, bless his heart, makes us forget the war inside his own little domain. "A glass of sherry, sir, before lunch?" "No, sir? Then a glass of limejuice?" "Would you have the electric fire on?" "You'll be more comfortable in that chair in the corner. Will you have the wireless on for the news? The Captain will be down in a moment" . . . as though he were coming down from his bedroom or bathroom, instead of from the bridge. As though we hadn't been rationed to one small jug of water for days. As though the Captain did not spend his nights and days upon the bridge, living in his dark-blue, fleeee-lined zipper suit that is also a life-jacket. Thank you, Mulley. You are a life-jacket to us. And I know the Captain thinks the same. And I know something else, too. However many weeks we are now destined to spend in each other's company, my admiration for him as captain and a man will only increase. As we sit at meals in his pleasant, spacious, green-painted day-cabin, someone, besides Mulley, always watches us. The photograph of a boy in an Army officer's uniform stands alone upon his desk. The ship's motion knocks it over and Mulley carefully sets it up again, for it is the picture of the 'Old Man's' son. He was only twenty-one when he gave his life to his country, and he was his father's only son. When we first left port there were many other photo frames out upon the desk—pictures of the Captain's lady and his daughters. As we steam nearer and nearer to the danger zone they have been put away; we are now stripped and ready for whatever lies ahead. But that one picture cannot be put away. Peter is here in the cabin, his presence is felt night and day—I can feel it myself—comforting and encouraging his father, reminding him that it is not all in vain, that one day they will meet again. The flowers that the Captain's wife arranged in the vase on the round table—pink geraniums, because they last best at sea—are now dead and Mulley threw them away to-day; but the life in Peter's eyes, which never shut, is a light that is wonderful to behold. "Don't fear; if we get a chance, we'll shoot the blighters out of the sky. The convoy will get through." But the Captain is not really talking to me. He is looking past me at his desk. He is seeking reassurance. He is holding communion.

31ST OCTOBER, 1942

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The less he spoke, the more he heard,
Why can't we be like that wise old bird?

THE framed picture of that wise old owl admonishing a youngster with its beak too wide open used to rock backwards and forwards on the wall of the cabin I shared with 'Smithy.' All through the voyage, that solemn old sourpuss looked down upon us with his beady eyes, and sardonically watched our reactions to the strange saga of events that made up this voyage. As a change from looking at Grandpa Owl, on the built-in writing table there was the framed picture of a very pretty girl, smiling at us with her eyes as well as with her mouth. But I never got tired of her smile, and I am sure that my room-mate didn't either. For it was the picture of his young wife. Sometimes, when he was off watch, 'Smithy' used to lie on the horsehair settee built into the other side of the cabin—he had generously given me his bunk—and talk about his missus and his longing for a son and, one day, a ship of his own. And then, the next moment, having pulled off his seaboots, he would be curled up with only a rug over him, in an oblivion of sleep. Two hours later 'Smithy' was giving me a shake. "Come on, Godfrey, you ought to be on the bridge, you're missing something." Meekly I got up, and by the time I had climbed the three companionways, up, up, all my sleepiness had vanished in the beauty of the vision slowly coming into sight, as the mists of dawn were dispersed by a sun shining somewhere behind layer upon layer of white gauze. We were slowly sliding up an Icelandic fiord, and both port and starboard loomed the guardian mountains, still covered with summer snow, and fresh abundant streams of crystal pure water were cascading down their sides, while in the distance, here and there, the pink-roofed chalets of the islanders appeared, popping through the mist. It was my first view of Iceland, and I shall never forget it.

7TH NOVEMBER, 1942

THE lack of feminine company at sea is a hunger and a pain that goes on gnawing away like a persistent toothache. Only if you have been on a long voyage in war-time can you truly understand the depth of the self-discipline of these men that keeps them somehow sweet-tempered and gentle towards each other with an almost feminine kindness. Yes, even the 'tough guys.' There's nothing they won't do for you. For instance, I remember coming down from the bridge one afternoon, and one of the boys on the flag deck called out to me as I passed, as casually as though we were on manoeuvres: "There's a nice dry wind for your dobbinging." Now that's their word for washing. They refused to be defeated by having no womenfolk to do it for them. Instead, they do it themselves and, I dare to suggest, better than you could do it. The Welsh, fair-haired steward of the P.O.s' mess volunteered to do my dobbinging for me. At first I agreed reluctantly. I should have known better. It turned out to be beautifully laundered, quite as good as the most expensive hand-laundry on shore. When I asked him how much I was indebted to him, he presented me shyly with a bill for half a crown, and said he hoped it wasn't too much. I could only mutter my words of thanks. I was so overwhelmed by his refusal to make anything out of a stranger on board. The truth was, of course, they all took a pride in looking upon me as their guest just as much as the Captain's. Another day, when I came down from the flag deck, it was to find a queue on deck, lined up to look at the wreckage of a Heinkel, brought down three or four miles away. They were taking it in turns to gaze through a long telescope just as, once upon a time, visitors to the South Coast on holiday used to queue up and pay their pennies on the beach for sight of the French coast. It's funny how some of these tiny memories, those small contrasts, stay with you longest.

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Icebergs. My first sight of them—had I been shown them on the screen at home in technicolour my instant reaction would have been, What an exaggeration! To begin with, they aren't white at all, but a pattern of exquisite greens and blues, more vivid and lovely than a child's paintbox. One sighted in the far distance looked exactly like an aeroplane frozen over, with its rudder standing up realistically like a question mark. We altered course to pass it close on the port beam, and, as we approached, one of the officers on the bridge exclaimed, almost under his breath: "Hell, I hope it's a German machine." I reckon he echoed all our feelings. Even so, I have a suspicion that most of us were relieved when, in the end, we discovered that it was only ice after all. Someone took a snapshot of that strange-looking iceberg, and afterwards I captured it for my Scrapbook.

14TH NOVEMBER, 1942

Mr. Godfrey Winn (may his fan-mail increase!)
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of Peace,
 In which he sat down to a tasty dish
 Of Caviare, two soups, three kinds of Fish,
 Tender Lamb enflavoured with sauce of aromatic Mint,
 Aylesbury Duckling, Norfolk Ham, Chicken, all without stint!
 At which point he awoke, to say, "Oh, Lor!
 What a dream to have when there's a Ruddy War!"

ONE morning, when we were tied up alongside a wharf near Archangel, my steward produced this poem in an envelope, as though it had arrived by the first post. It was neatly typed out, and as I read it through the morning seemed brighter. Afterwards I discovered that it had been composed by the ship's storekeeper, Mr. Habbale, who had a great reputation on board for versifying. Even in the teeth of the battle he still used to produce a 'stop news' ditty to amuse the boys. I came to realize that it was when you were in port, waiting for the return journey, that his infectious humour was most valuable as a tonic. For as long as you are at sea everyone has a job to do all the time, while every hour is different, every moment may mean the sighting of a periscope, or the sudden sharp cry from one of the look-outs on the bridge: "Aircraft in sight!" But it is later, when you are alongside at last, and your food store is down to the last layer of tins, and it's a bully beef 'surprise' for dinner every day, that the crew is most hard-pressed and has need to call upon all its reserves of national doggedness and good humour.

Don't turn over the page, just think for a moment how often some member of your family just sits down to a meal and makes no effort at conversation these days—just sits there and goes on munching until the meal is over! And if they do speak at all, it is always to complain about the shortage of this or the deterioration of that. I feel guilty enough myself when I read over that last sentence—and perhaps that is why I was so deeply impressed by the way in which all the boys in my ship used to do their best at meal-time to pretend that there really was a 'surprise' about it; that instead of one more hash-up of bully beef they were really sitting down to the sort of dream repast that my friend, the storekeeper, looking at his empty shelves, had captured in verse. And, you know, it was the same whether I was having lunch in the Captain's cabin, or tea in the wardroom, or supper as a great treat in the P.O.'s mess. And so next time you're feeling 'browned off'—as they say in the Services—and too tired even to ask politely for the salt, you might think of all the countless British ships, trawlers and cruisers, minesweepers and armed merchantmen, scattered all over the world now, far away from 'home eats,' big eats, and still somehow keeping up a show of the party spirit at meal-time. I am not at all sure that medals should not be given for that just as much as for shooting down Heinkels.

It is a privilege to reprint something else, too, in my Scrapbook. Something that, typed

out, came to stand against the wall on the table in my cabin, next door to the poem with which I commenced this page. I had copied it out from the original which stood in the Captain's cabin. Left behind by another of the Captain's guests, a man whom I have never met, but for whom I have an infinite admiration. The Rev. 'Tubby' Clayton, the founder and inspiration of Toc H., who in this war has lighted a fresh torch of valour by crossing the Atlantic in an oil tanker, and volunteering to be chaplain to all the oil-tanker men on this suicidally dangerous route. "You will agree that these men should be looked after well when they go ashore," he said, when at last he came back to London on leave. The card he left behind in our ship was headed: A VALENTINE FROM MEN AT SEA TO YOU AT HOME. "*It ain't easy, thank the Lord, to break up hearts of oak, whether they're in brigs or buzzums.*" That comes from Dickens' *Captain Cuttle*, and underneath was inscribed: 'With the God speed of Toc H. Orkney,' and finally, this prayer:

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console ; to be understood, as to understand ; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive ; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned ; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

21ST NOVEMBER, 1942

I AM writing this in bed, but that does not matter a scrap, because I am on my native soil again, home at my cottage on sick leave. If you could see me now you would be quite surprised, because my hair has gone appreciably grey, but all I have to show otherwise for the series of fantastic adventures that has been my lot on this Arctic trip is a broken thumb, badly crushed in a steel door during the return journey, and set in plaster of Paris at the Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow, the first night I set foot on my native soil again. I shall always have a special corner in my heart hereafter for the way in which the Scottish nurses and doctors looked after me that night, when the pain that I had been suffering for several days had come to its climax. They were simply grand to me. What they did not know was that during those last days at sea I forced myself to hold on to a sentence, spoken quite casually by a sixteen-year-old boy in a hospital somewhere in North Russia. In his ward there were many cases of frost-bite and shock and exposure from having been sunk in those bitter Arctic water, through which my own ship had recently run the gauntlet. This lad, a galley boy in one of the British merchantmen that ceaselessly go to and fro, their decks packed high with vital war material for our Russian allies, had both legs amputated above the knee and one of his arms, the only hope of saving his life after his long immersion in the water. A visitor who spoke English came through the ward and, stopping by his bed, asked him how he was getting along. And this was his answer: "Oh, I'm fine. The Ruskies look after us marvellously. The only thing we lack here is a football to kick around the ward."

His name is Jimmy Campbell. Remember it, please.

And remember, too, the name of Ernie Davidson. On the voyage out I used to watch him from my vantage point on the bridge, blazing away at action stations from his gun platform aft. With his tin hat perched on top of his dark-blue balaclava, he used to remind me of a crusader in chain mail. But he talked like a Cockney, a good 'un, too! One night, in the middle watch, we had a chat. "You know, Godfrey, all I ask at the end of this trip is to be allowed to sit at home with my feet in the oven and the wireless full on, and my old lady somewhere around." "Your old lady?" I queried. "Yus, my Ma. I'd die for my old lady, I would." And then he went back to his gun. But I did not forget his words, and when the moment came for me to leave them and hitch-hike back from Russia, I went to Ernie and said: "Give me a message for your old lady, and I'll see that it is delivered." And the first thing my secretary, Miss Restall, did was to send the message off to 22, Northern Road, Plaistow, E.13. Did you get it, Ma?

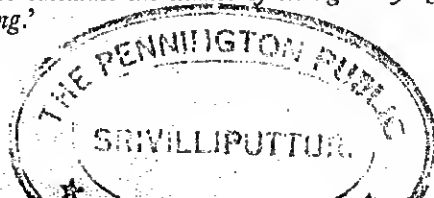
28TH NOVEMBER, 1942

FROM the bottom of the orchard the smoke of a bonfire drifts in wistful spirals and is lost in the autumn twilight. I shivered suddenly as I watched it, though I have always loved the scent and tang of wood smoke in my nostrils. I wasn't shivering from cold, because of the warmth in my heart to be home again. Home again, and in the mood to remind myself in consequence that 'if winter comes, can spring be far behind?' Yes, but as I stand there, in solitude with my thoughts, I cannot help remembering some of the men who will never see an English garden in the spring again. Particularly I am thinking of a description someone gave me of a week-end they spent one early autumn of the war with the Duke and Duchess of Kent, and how, to the huge delight of everyone's children, on Sunday afternoon they made a bonfire in the garden, and then in the dusk their host and hostess went back to the house, because Nannie had said they might bath the baby as a special treat, as the Duke was on leave. When I came back from my recent long voyage, cut off from all home news, it was a tremendous shock to find that the Duke of Kent was amongst those who, in the three months of my absence, had given their lives for their country on active service. Not that I was surprised that he had been prepared to take all risks. For I knew how passionately he wanted always to share the lot of the ordinary Service man. Indeed, I have personal knowledge of that. For in my war diary, that can only be published in full after the war, there is a certain extract which I feel the time has come to be printed in this Scrapbook. It was written on April 7th, 1940, when the Duke was still with the Navy, his first love, and I was on a visit to a naval base in Scotland. It reads: 'The room was on the small side, and very simply furnished. There were two desks side by side, and the only two chairs in the room were hard-backed ones of the office variety; two windows with Spartan black-out curtains, a wash-hand stand in the one corner, while half-hidden behind another black curtain stood an ordinary iron bedstead with a rug folded over it, which reminded me instinctively of a dormitory cubicle at school. I was asked to sit down while my companion did some telephoning. So I sat down in the other chair, in front of the desk at which the Duke of Kent worked for several months on end—that was his bed in the corner, too—when he was acting as Intelligence Officer at Rosyth. And my companion volunteered, with considerable enthusiasm, that the Duke had done his job, and more than his job, by day and by night, shirking nothing and bringing an extremely swift intelligence to all the problems which cropped up. Incidentally, this officer ended the conversation with a very illuminating comment which I would like to think will be widely read and remembered. He said: "The first days the Duke was here in the office with us I couldn't make him out at all. He hardly spoke, and I began to think . . . and then I suddenly realized that his apparent standoffishness was entirely due to shyness. Once that was broken down, everything was grand. We miss him tremendously." When he told me that, I was silent myself, thinking of all the people there are in this world who on so many occasions have been misjudged or misunderstood because of the same degree of shyness in their make-up.'

We Are Not Alone—that was the title of one of James Hilton's novels. It has stayed with me ever since. Comfort yourself with those words. We are not alone. Fight your war weariness. Don't be ashamed of your war nerves, everyone is attacked by them to lesser or greater degree. And the best escape is to lose yourself in the contemplation of the greater conflict; to read an epic like Steinbeck's *The Moon is Down*, in which are quoted the words of Socrates that have even more meaning to-day than when they were first spoken, over two thousand years ago. I can think of none better for the end of this the first volume of my war-time Scrapbook.

'A man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether he is doing right or wrong.'

1849
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" Was It an Iceberg, on our port beam, or a crushed plane frozen over ? "



After one action our decks were knee-deep in empty shell cases."



All that was left of the leading raiders' plane . .
our second bag that day.

Godfrey Winn's Scrapbook of the War

ON BOARD H.M.S. ...

WE are just off. This morning the Admiral of the Base inspected the ship's company. He spoke to the man and officers afterwards, and said that he had never seen a finer turn-out. They looked magnificent. I am so proud to be their mascot for what the Admiral called a special operation, though I am sharing that privilege with a baby kitten, eight days old, which, as I write this last message on the wardroom table, I can see being fed with a fountain pen filler in the steward's pantry.

Everyone in the ship is writing his good-bye letter. This is mine. Everyone has the same thoughts, thoughts about his home. I would give anything at this moment to be transported for five minutes to the end of the lane that leads to my cottage.

Mr. Sponge would be waiting there, I know. He has never failed me yet. And then I shouldn't go in at the front door, but past the scarlet briar roses to the garden at the back, where I know, too, I should see the small, slight figure that is all the world to me. She would straighten her back, push a strand of white hair from her eyes and smile her welcome, as though I had never been away. Perhaps one's spirit stays always in the place one loves best. I am only sure of one thing. If we don't come back, and this is a very special party, my mother will go on planting bulbs for the spring, living up to the motto that is the very backbone of her philosophy. Flowers for the Living. But, of course, we shall come back. Still, it's a good philosophy. Is it yours?

GODFREY WINN.

